THE BEST WAY To MEND the WORLD, AND TO Prevent the GROWTH of POPERY:

BY

Perſwading the Riſing Generation to an Early and Serious Practice of PIETY: With Anſwers to the principal Cavils of Satan and his Agents againſt it, *&c.*

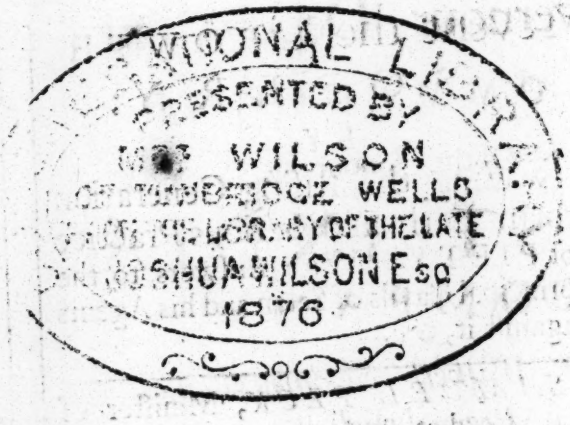
By *SAMUEL PECK*, Miniſter of the Word at *Popler*.

Eccleſ. XII. i.

Remember now thy Creatour in the dayes of thy Youth, while the evil dayes come not, and the years draw nigh, wherein thou ſhalt ſay, I find no pleaſure.

Minimè bonus eſt, qui melior fieri non vult. *Bern.*
Macte novâ virtute Puer, ſic itur ad Aſtra. *Virg.*

London, Printed by *J. A.* for *Thomas Parkhurſt*, at the Bible and three Crowns at the lower end of *Cheapſide*, near *Mercers-Chappel*, 1680.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1876

TO THE

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

THE

Governour, Deputy and COMMITTEES

Of the Honourable

EAST-INDIA COMPANY:

S. P. *Wiſheth Temporal and Eternal Felicity.*

Right Honourable,

I Can call God and the Congregation over which God and you have ſet me, to witneſs, that according to my Du-

ty, I ceaſe not to pray for an encreaſe of your Succeſs and Proſperity, Righteouſneſs and Mercy. That as by the former you may augment your Treaſures on Earth, ſo by the latter you may ſecure your Treaſure in Heaven. Or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *lay up to your ſelves a good foundation, that you may lay hold on Eternal Life*, 1 Tim. 1. 6. 18, 19. And can ſay withall, as in the hearing of my great Lord and Judge, I have faithfully endeavoured in my place the Promotion of true Religion and Vertue amongſt all ſorts; eſpecially the Younger; knowing what advantages attend on Early Piety; and how much the Hopes and Happineſs of our

Church

Church and State depend upon a ſober and Religious riſing Generation. Conſequently, how much it concerns us all to look to the well ſeaſoning of thoſe Youth that are committed to our Charge, as we tender the future good of the Kingdom wherein we live. And when I conſider how too ſadly true thoſe words of the Poet are (which agree well with thoſe of our Saviour, *Math.* 7. 13.)

——*Mundi pars maxima nigros*
Tendit ad Inferni manes, ubi luctus &
(iræ.

That the moſt goe the worſt way. And the many Setters we have in this Age, whoſe deſign is to pervert Youth, and

draw them on to Atheiſm, Popery and Prophaneneſs; I judged it my duty to endeavour their Safety and preſervation. To which end, I have in this ſmall Eſſay (to avoid prolixity) ſummed up what Arguments I could to prevail with them to be Religious betimes; ſhewing them both the Neceſſity, Reaſonableneſs and Advantage of an early Dedication of themſelves to God.

(*ſecum,*
Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda
Multa recidentes ademunt. Hor.

And that Youth affords them many Adjuments and Opportunities for Heaven, which old Age will deprive them of.

Now

Now my Reaſons (*Right Honourable*) of Craving your Patronage of ſo ſmall a work, are theſe.

My great Obligations to you, which I am willing to take this Opportunity to acknowledge to the World: A great part of my Encouragement and Maintenance in the place where I am, ariſing from your Bounty.

And becauſe I know your countenance of this Undertaking will render it much more acceptable to thoſe for whom it is deſigned. The Hand oft-times commends the Gift. If therefore you ſhall pardon my preſumption, and Recommend it to the Youth you have relation

to, and influence upon, both at Home, and in Foraign parts, I hope God will send his Blessing with it, and make it successful, that you may see an hopeful Progeny rising up to inherit your Vertues, as well as Riches. Which that you may, shall be the Prayer of

Popler, April 24. 1680.

Your Honours

Most humble Chaplain

and Servant in the

Work of Christ,

Samuel Peck.

TO THE

YOUTH

OF THE

PARISH of *STEPNEY*,

especially those of the Hamblet of *Popler* and *Blackwall*, which are under my more particular Charge:

S. P. wisheth Early Piety and Endless Glory.

Courteous Youths,

RElegion *is by some derived from* Religando, *because it binds us to God; by others from* re Elegendo, *a choosing again. Mans first choyce is usually evil, and when he comes to see his Error and choose again, he mends his choice. That you may make the best choice at first, and so prevent much trouble to your selves, is my hearty desire. And therefore I have in this Essay recommended Religion and the timely*

timely and ſerious practice of it to you, in your youth. And however you may eſteem of this Counſell now, in a little time more I am ſure you will ſay it is good; and wiſh (if you neglect it) you had been wiſer. For though Satan blinds the eyes of men in life, yet death will open them. I have ever obſerved dying perſons to have the trueſt ſentiments and notions, the deepeſt impreſſions and ſtrongeſt convictions of a God, an Heaven and Hell, the ſouls Immortality, and future Judgment, of any other. If the profoundeſt Hobbiſt, *the rankeſt Atheiſt of our Age were preſent with a dying man, whoſe Reaſon*
1 Tim. 4. 2. *is ſound and Conſcience not ſeared, he could not by all his reaſoning perſwade him to believe, that there is no God, no future ſtate, no reward or recompenſe to be expected or feared, that his ſoul is like the Beaſts that periſheth, and being once dead there is an end of him. No, the light of Reaſon and Conſcience, and Principles of Religion, are not ſo eaſily baffled and extinguiſhed when men are leaving the World. Nor can I believe he that hath moſt and longeſt endeavoured to eradicate all notions and ſenſe of Religion and of a Deity out of his mind, can at all times quietly ſit down, void of all trouble and heſitation, with this reſolve, that he may live as he liſt, there is none above him to pleaſe or*

diſ-

displeaſe, to love or fear, or to call him to an account for what he hath done. Doubtleſs therefore, you have a God to ſerve, and ſouls to ſave, and a Rule to direct you how to do the former, ſo as you fail not of the latter, viz. The written Word of God: *Which tells you, the World, Satan and your own hearts (if followed) will lead you to Vanity, ſin and endleſs miſery: That it is a timely and an hearty repentance, a lively faith in Chriſt, a ſuperlative love to God, and an holy and conſtant obedience to his reaſonable and divine commands, which alone can make you happy in this and the other World:* That without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord; that your Converſation muſt be in Heaven here, *as ever you hope Heaven ſhall be your habitation when you go hence. So that let the mad World ſay what it will, Religion is to be minded as your main buſineſs, and the practice of Piety as your greateſt concern. And the ſooner you make it ſo, the ſooner ſhall you be in favour with God, and armed againſt the killing ſting of the King of Terrors. Which whenever it comes, in Youth or Old age; will make you either as miſerable as Devils, or as happy as Angels. I ſhall add no more, but deſire you to make this little book your pocket-companion, which may ſometimes be an aſſiſtant to you in grapling*

Heb. 12. 14. Phil. 3. 20

ling with a Luſt, encountring a Temptation, or anſwering any objection or Cavil, which the Devil or his Agents may make againſt the early dedication of your ſelves to God, by an holy life. Nor ſhall I make any other apology for this publication in this Cenſorious age but this; He that winneth ſouls is wiſe. Pro.11.30. *'Tis my duty and deſire by all wayes and means to promote the good of Souls. And if among the many thouſand young ones in this Pariſh, I can gain but one from ſin to righteouſneſs, from Satan to God, I ſhall reckon it an abundant Recompence for all the Cenſures I can ſuffer from evil men. If with holy* David *I may glorifie God, and ſerve my generation by doing good, in this or any other kind, I ſhall anſwer the end of my being, and of my being what I am. Which that I may, let him have the help of your prayers, who compaſſionately wiſhes the eternall health and happineſs of your Souls,*

April 24th.
1680.

Samuel Peck.

In

IN
LAUDEM OPERIS.

IF to reform the *Age*, and ſtop the Sluce
Of flowing wickedneſs that's now let looſe
Throughout the world, if to reſtore in one
The life and beauty of *Religion*
Unto their primitive perfection,
Or to revive languiſhing piety,
Any endeavour may conducive be,
It muſt be ſuch as theſe *preventatives*,
The only means to ſave thoſe pretious lives
That yet are free from the inveterate rage
Of Vicious habits, mortal made by age:
Obſte principiis, Sin's incroachments be
Beſt Smothered by an Early piety;
The young men of the Princes muſt be they
That muſt the Enemies of *Iſrael* ſlay, 1 King. 20. 14.
And gain the conqueſt; *young men*, it muſt be
Your ſelves muſt gain the glorious Victorie
Over *God's* Enemies; ſuch by St. *John*
Are ſaid to *Overcome* the *wicked one*:
Now be Courageous, and to lead you on,
See here is come a *Chriſtian Champion*,
That will *Conduct* you 'gainſt the armed files
Of Helliſh Powers, and betray their wiles
Unto your View; follow his conduct, let
Your Eyes be now upon his *Counſels* ſet

Hearken

In Laudem Operis.

Hearken unto his Exhortations, bend
Your minds to the advice of such *a friend*
That sees your *danger*, and endeavours thus
To render you at last Victorious:
Youths, let your practice be his praise, as one
That seeks no more, the profit's still your own.

R. Tuke.

Books

Books lately Printed for Tho. Parkhurſt *at the Bible and Three Crowns in* Cheapſide.

ONe Hundred Select Sermons on ſeveral Texts: Preached by *Tho. Horton*, late of St. *Hellens*, *London*. Printed from his own Manuſcripts left under his hand.

Sermons by the ſame Author on 4th. Pſalm: 42, 51, 63. Pſalm.

Several Diſcourſes concerning the actual Providence of God, in 55. Sermons on ſeveral Texts: by *John Collings*, D. D.

Sermons of Grace and Temptation: by *Tho. Froyſel* late Miniſter of *Clunne* in *Shrop-ſhire*.

Kingdom of God among Men, with a diſcourſe of Unity and Schiſme: by *John Corbet*, Author of Intereſt of *England*.

Chriſt diſplayed as the choyceſt Gift, and Beſt Maſter; by *Nath. Heywood*.

Glimpſe of Eternity; by *Abraham Caley*.

An Expoſition on the Aſſemblies Chatechiſme; by *Tho. Vincent*.

Divine Conſolations againſt the fear of Death; by *John Gerrard*.

Mr. *Edward Weſt's* Legacy.

Counſel and comfort for Troubled Souls: by *Hen. Wilkinſon*, D. D.

A Warning to young men, in an Impartial Relation of the horrid murther acted by *Robert Brinkhurſt*.

A practical Diſcourſe of Prayer; wherein is handled the nature and duty of Prayer; by *Tho. Cobbet*.

Of

Of quenching the Spirit; the evil of it, in reſpect both of its cauſes and effects, diſcovered; by *Theophilus Polwhiele.*

The re-building of *London* encouraged and improved in ſeveral meditations: by *Samuel Rolls.*

The ſure way to Salvation; or a Treatiſe of the Saints myſtical Union with Chriſt; by *Richard Stedman.* M. A.

Sober Singularity, by the ſame Author.

The miſchief of ſin: by *Tho. Watſon.*

The Childs Delight; together with an Engliſh Grammar.

Reading and Spelling made eaſie; both by *Tho. Lye.*

The Young-mans Inſtructor, and the Old-mans Remembrancer; being an Explanation of the Aſſemblies Catechiſm.

Captives bound in Chains, made free by Chriſt their Surety; both by *Tho. Doolitle.*

Eighteen Sermons preached upon ſeveral Texts of Scripture, by *William Whitaker.*

The life and death of *Edmund Stanton*, D. D. To which is added, a Treatiſe of Chriſtian-conference; and a Dialogue between a Miniſter and a Stranger.

Sin the plague of Plagues, or ſinful ſin the worſt of Evils; by *Ralph Venning*, M. A.

Caſes of Conſcience practically reſolved; by *J. Norman.*

The Faithfulneſs of God conſidered and cleared in the great Events of his Word; or a Second part of the fulfilling of the Scripture.

A

Cordial Endeavour

TO

Prevail with YOUTH to be Pious.

CHAP. I.

SInce the first quarrell in the Garden between Man and the Devil, wherein Satan proved so successful, he hath never wanted Seconds to take up his Weapons and manage his warfare against the promised seed. God told the Woman then, *I Will put enmity*, and hath it not proved true? Hath it not been so all along from *Adam* to *Noah*, from *Noah* to *Abraham*, and so to Christ? Mark the whole passages of our Saviours life, and tell me what day was not to him a persecution? how was he tossed from post to pillar, and from one danger to another? How many wiles and snares did the Enemies contrive Gen. 2. 15.

Mark 14. 1. and lay for him, *that they might take him and put him to death?* which though he long avoided, yet at length this their wicked purpose was effected. And now the Captain is taken, the Soldier must look to suffer; v. 46. when the principal is slain, the followers must expect to bleed. The apprehension of Christ could not quench or satisfie the bloody thirst of these blinded *Jews*, but having laid hands on the leader, they eagerly seek after all the herd. Having rent the Lamb from the fold, they seek to worry the whole Flock, as appears by the Evangelists relation of the Soldiers dealing with a young man that followed Christ. v. 51, 52. *And there followed him a certain young man having a linen cloth about his naked body, and the young men laid hold on him; and he left his linen Cloth and fled from them naked*; Fled for his life, and glad he could escape with an whole skin. Some would have this Amos 2. last. tragedy foretold by the prophet *Amos*; *And he that is Couragious among the mighty, shall flee away naked in that day, saith the Lord.* But I conceive otherwise: that the prophet here speaks of the flight of the *Israelites* before their enemyes, which the Deut. 28. 15. Lord himself had threatned of old by *Moses* for their disobedience. This therefore of the Evangelist cannot be said to be any ac-

accompliſhment or fulfilling of any particular prediction of any of the Prophets. But an Hiſtoricall relation of what befell this young man, and conſequently may befall any, who will be faithful followers of Chriſt in a day of trouble. Which Hiſtory St. *Mark* records for two reaſons: Firſt, to ſhew the truth of Chriſts ſaying, *That the ſervant is not greater than his Lord, and if they perſecute me they will perſecute you.* Which ſaying he bids them remember. Secondly, to diſcover the Malice of Chriſts enemies, whoſe rage and malice againſt him was ſuch, that a bare ſuſpition to be of his party, to be one of his followers, was enough to bring a man into eminent danger of his life. So that it had been Impoſſible for the Apoſtles to have eſcaped their Violence, had not the Divine power of Chriſt preſerved them for that great work to which He had aſſigned them. For ſeeing this young man following of Chriſt, they laid hands on him, and 'twas a narrow ſcape he made from them. I ſhall not enquire who this young man was, concerning whom there are different opinions. But onely note, his action beſpake his affection to Chriſt, for he followed him, followed him in bonds, left all to follow him, and that when his own Diſciples

John 15. 20.

v. 49. 50.

(the great Preachers and firſt profeſſors of his Name) fled away and forſook him. All which circumſtances duely weighed and put together, may make up a demonſtration of love and affection. And what this young man did, is the duty of all young ones to doe, *viz.* to follow Chriſt, that is, to be truely Religious, according to their Baptiſmal Vow, and the Goſpel which they profeſs and own. To govern themſelves by the rule of righteouſneſs, endeavouring to anſwer the hope they have through Chriſt of future glory, and the many and great obligations Chriſt hath laid upon them to duty and obedience. And to convince (you young men) that this is your duty, and to draw you to the ſpeedy and ſincere practice of the ſame, is the end of this ſmall Eſſay and undertaking. Since I am equally concerned for the good of your ſouls, with thoſe that are Elder. The ſoul of the Child is as prétious as the ſoul of the Servant: The ſoul of the Servant of as much value as the ſoul of the greateſt Lord or Maſter. And when I conſider the general Corruption and looſneſs of this age, and think how many lie in weight to ſeduce young ones, ſome to Popery; others to open profaneneſs and debauchery, the high way to direct Irreligion

religion and Atheiſm, I judged it greatly needful (in my place and capacity) to give warning, to diſcover, and ſhew you your danger, and to prevent it, by exciting you to your duty. If poſſibly, I may ſave ſome of your ſouls, or at leaſt clear my own. For when I read and meditate on thoſe words of the Lord by his Prophet; *When I ſay unto the wicked, thou ſhalt ſurely dye, and thou giveſt him not warning, nor ſpeakeſt to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to ſave his life, the ſame wicked man ſhall dye in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedneſs, nor from his wicked way, he ſhall dye in his iniquity, but thou haſt delivered thy ſoul*; I tremble, as well to think what will become of thoſe Watchmen, that warn not, as of thoſe people, who are warned and regard it not. Now though this Eſſay ſpeaks more directly to you that are younger, yet the matter of it may be ſuitable and profitable to all, both old and young. For when Elder perſons hear how much it behoves young ones to be religious, they may rationally conclude it highly concerns them to be ſo much more, who according to the Courſe of Nature have leſs time to ſpend, and Ezek. 3. 8,19.

are ſo many years nearer to Death, Judgment and Eternity, than the former. I ſhall therefore intreat your regard to what you read, in the Pſalmiſts Compellation, *Young Men and Maidens, Old Men and Children*, mind the Word of the Lord, which like the rain falling upon the Earth, ſhall accompliſh the end for which it is ſent, either to ſoften or harden, to be either a *ſavour of life unto life, or a ſavour of death unto death*, to every Soul that reads it. And that my words may make the better and deeper impreſſion, I ſhall preſs your duty in this Method.

1. Shew you that 'tis your duty to be Religious in your Youth.
2. Urge the Utility and ſafety of it.
3. Anſwer the many Cavils or diſcouragements, that Satan, wicked men, or your own corrupt hearts doe or can make againſt it.
4. Shew the Reaſonableneſs and excellency of it.

1. It is the Duty of young perſons to follow Chriſt, to put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to make no proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfill the luſts thereof. To be religious, mindfull of God, and the well-being of their own ſouls, both in this and another world. Hence 'tis that the Wiſe man,

man, ſo frequently calls upon young men to *hear inſtruction, to learn wiſdom and the fear of the Lord*; *and to Remember their Creator in the dayes of their youth*; that is, know, love, fear, and ſerve him: for words of knowledge in Scripture imply Affection and Practice, Love and Obedience. *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his Commandments, and his Judgements, which I command thee this day*; ſo that not to keep the Commandments of God, is to forget him; and to do them, is rightly to remember him: thus *Solomon* requires thee to remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth; while thou art ſtrong, vigorous, and beſt able in all the faculties of thy ſoul and parts of thy body to do good ſervice. So that Queſtion of *David*, *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way*, hath the force of a command to cleanſe and free your wayes from all uncleanneſs, unrighteouſneſs, perverſneſs and crookedneſs, and to make them direct, upright, ſtraight and holy, according to the Word. And in the judgment of *Jeremiah*, this is the proper ſeaſon for obedience and ſubjection. *It is good for a man to bear the yoak in his youth.* Whether you will underſtand it of *Jugum crucis*, the yoak of divine Chaſtiſements, or *Jugum precepti*, the yoak

Eccleſ. 12. 1. Deut. 8. 11. Pſal. 119. 9. Lam. 3.27.

of Divine Precepts, which is ſo heavy and irkſom to the generallity of youth, who cannot bear reſtraint, or limitation, no not from God himſelf. Liberty, liberty, they are all for this, not conſidering that *deteriores omnes ſumus licentia*, we are all the worſe for taking more liberty than God allows. And men never meet a more certain and ſpeedy ruine, than when they follow their own Wills. So true is that Proverb of ours, *Wilful perſons never want woe*. Yet as heavy a yoak as this ſeems to be, young men, you muſt take it up ſooner or later, if you will be ſaved; and the ſooner, the better, the Prophet tells you ſo: *'tis good to bear the yoak in your youth*. And St. *Paul*, who paid ſo dear for ſetting out after Chriſt no ſooner, gives this advice to his young ſon *Timothy*, *to flee all youthful luſts, and to follow after righteouſneſs, faith and charity*. And you read under the Law it was Gods ordinance, that in the Meat offerings of their Firſt fruits, they ſhould offer green Ears of corn. The Goſpel of it is this, that God expects and requires a primary and early dedication of our ſelves to him. That ſo ſoon as we come to age and underſtanding to diſpoſe of our hearts and affections, we ſhould firſt offer them to him. For with ſuch

2 Tim. 2. 22.

Lev. 2. 14.

offer-

offerings, the firſt fruits, the green Ears, the youthfull age, God is well pleaſed; as you may gather by the favour of God to thoſe perſons, who very early devoted themſelves to his ſervice; as *Samuel*, who began to ſerve God in his minority; *Joſiah*, who at eight years of age did that that was right in the ſight of God; and *Tymothy*, who knew the Scriptures from a child; and the children of the elect Lady, whom St. *John* teſtifies walked in the truth. 2 Epiſt. v. 3, 4. Theſe precepts and preſidents from Scripture, are ſufficient to prove that it is the duty of young men to mind Religion, to walk in all the wayes of God, and to take up Chriſts yoak and burden, and to follow him, who in the dayes of his humiliation encouraged ſuch to come to him, by telling them, *that of ſuch was the Kingdom of God*, Mark 10. 14.

CHAP.

CHAP II.

Containing ſome Arguments to prove the Equity, and Neceſſity, and Safety of this Duty, and to enforce the Practice of it.

§. 1. SIrs, though at firſt view this may ſeem an hard ſaying, and an harſh and unreaſonable task; yet upon deliberate and ſerious thinking, you will find it is founded upon good, upon great, very great reaſon. It is highly reaſonable and juſt, that God, who made you ſhould have the beſt of you, the beſt of your age and time. Now our firſt dayes are our beſt. *Optima quaque dies miſeris mortalibus ævi, prima fugit.* The choyceſt part of mans life is that, which firſt paſſeth from him. Youth is the Golden age, wherein our ſouls are brisk and lively, and our bodies active and ſtrong to labour. Now are you fitteſt and beſt able to watch and pray, and undergoe the ſeverities of Religion. Old age is full of infirmities, dim eyes, ſhaking heads, trembling hands, and feeble legs: Old men are dull of apprehenſion, of bad Capacity and remembrance, and clogged with

with thoſe cares and croſſes, which youth is free from. And is there any reaſon God ſhould be put off with the dregs of old age, when you have ſpent your ſpriteful youth in the ſervice of ſin? You read that the King of *Babel would have young men, well favoured, without blemiſh, and ſuch as were of great ability to ſtand before him*, and ſhall the King of *Iſrael*, the Lord of Glory have none to ſtand in his Courts, but the halt, the blind and the lame, ſuch as *David* hated? Old *Barzillay* rendred this as a reaſon why he was unfit to wait on the King at *Jeruſalem*, his old age; and is old age, which is neither ſerviceable nor acceptable to men, good enough for God? When you have not a good leg to bring you to Gods Houſe, nor good Ears to hear his Word, nor a good Eye to read the Scriptures, nor a good head to retain nor a good Intellect to apply or improve what you read or hear, ſhall God be ſerved now and not before? Hath God given you thoſe members, ſenſes and faculties perfect and good, and will you not employ them in his ſervice till they are ſpoiled and fit for nothing? Till the members of your bodyes are multiplied by Crutches and Glaſſes, and the powers of your ſouls quite debilitated and decayed? is there any reaſon for this? Dan. 1. 4.

this? Were you to preſent a gift to the King, would you not preſent the beſt you have? how much more ought you to do this to God? dare you think he deſerves leſs than man, or will be put off with what man will not accept? If you do, you are vilely miſtaken. *If you offer the blind for ſacrifice, is it not evil, or the lame and the ſick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governour, will he be pleaſed with thee, or accept thy perſon, ſaith the Lord of hoſts?* Take heed therefore you do not reſerve that for God, which you would be aſhamed to offer to man: he will not accept it, nor is there any reaſon he ſhould. 'Tis highly reaſonable and juſt you give him the beſt of all, from whom you receive all you have and hope for.

Mal. 1. 8.

§. 2. Youth is the moſt ſeaſonable time for Religion and the ſervice of God. Then are men moſt capable of inſtruction, advice and Counſel; then are they moſt flexible and moſt apt and eaſie to be wrought upon, to be brought to a good courſe of piety and Religion. *Pueri ad omnem diſciplinam ſunt flexibiliores: ad omnem diſciplinam tardior eſt ſenectus.* There is a vaſt difference between Youth and old age, in reſpect of diſcipline and flexibility. The Wax when 'tis ſoft receives the beſt and faireſt impreſ-

ſion,

ſion; the Tree while young is moſt eaſily bowed. Young perſons are moſt receptive of wholſome inſtruction, and moſt eaſily brought to any thing that is good. Remember this, you that are young, if you ſhall neglect Religion, ſlight and ſhun the wayes and Commands of God now, and vanquiſh all thoughts of God and his ſervice till you are old; you cannot imagin what an hard matter you will find it then, to diſpoſe your minds to holineſs, and frame your lives to godlineſs and Religion: as hard a matter, as for an aged perſon to learn to read well in a day that never knew a letter in all his life. We ſay of a man, who hath long addicted himſelf to ſloth, he cannot work. Why what is the matter? hath he not his limbs, his health, his ſtrength, and a Calling to imploy them in? yes, but he hath gotten ſuch an habit of idleneſs that he cannot work, he had rather ſuffer than labour, want then work. Thus 'tis in reſpect of Religion, if you now addict your ſelves to impiety and ſin, and are wholly unhinged as to Religion and the ſervice of God, while you are young, in old age you will find a kind of impoſſibility to be otherwiſe, to change your courſe, ſeriouſly to mind Religion, to brook an holy and ſtrict courſe of life, to imitate, obey

and

and follow Christ whithersoever he calls you, though 'tis to save your immortal souls. There is very much in those words of *Solomon* to this purpose; *Train up a child in the way he should goe, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* If thou art trained up in sin, trained up in a loose, licentious course of living in thy youth, when thou art old thou wilt not depart from it. Men think when they are old, then they will mend, then they will forsake their evil wayes, leave their youthful vices, and become marvellous devout, holy, heavenly, and close followers of Christ. But very hardly, 'tis the way you have been trained up in, the course you have many years been accustomed to, and you cannot now alter or depart from it. No less power than that which stops the Sun in its course, and turns the Rivers of the south, can stay thy carier, or turn thee out of the way wherein thou hast so long walked. St. *Paul* makes it *a Peradventure, if such repent and recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil.* When men have deferred repentance so long, and been the willing captives of Satan so many years, 'tis an hazard if they repent, recover themselves, and return to God. When the Devil had gotten possession of that man in the Gospel, and it was so hard

Pro. 22. 6.

2 Tim. 2. 25, 26.

a matter to caſt him out, that the diſciples Mark 9.
of Chriſt could not doe it, with all their 20. 21.
power and prayers; when Chriſt had diſpoſſeſſed him, and obſerved with what extremity, foaming and renting, the Devil came forth, he asked the Father of the poſſeſſed, *how long this had hapned to his ſon?* Anſwer is made *of a child.* So if Satan get poſſeſſion of you in your childhood and youth, and continue till you are old, he will plead right and title to you then, and if ever he be diſpoſſeſſed it will be with great pain, great grief and ſorrow, yea and with no ſmall hazard of your life; I mean the life of your ſoul, for he will hold faſt and rent you to purpoſe e're he part with you. As good old *Polycarpus* ſaid concerning Chriſt, *Theſe eighty ſix years he hath been my Maſter, and I his Servant, ſhall I deny him now, or leave him now at laſt caſt? No, I will dye firſt.* So doth Satan ſay concerning men; This perſon hath ſerved me from his youth, I have been his maſter theſe forty, fifty, ſixty years, and ſhall I let him go now at laſt caſt? no I will keep him mine to the end, if all the power of hell can doe it. Therefore now is the fitteſt and moſt ſeaſonable time to make choice of the Maſter you intend to follow and ſerve, Chriſt or the Devil; one muſt be, and which

you

you take to now, 'tis probable you will ſtick to and ſerve to your Dying Day. Moreover, if you conſider the requiſites to a Diſciple of Chriſt, and ſincere profeſſor of Religion, you will find Youth the moſt proper Seaſon to attain them in. If you will be Diſciples of Chriſt, true Chriſtians, and unfeignedly religious, you muſt be humble and broken in heart for ſin. Soul-compunction is neceſſary to Salvation. St. *Peters* Converts to Chriſt were humble and
Act. 3. 37. *pricked in their hearts*, and cried out, *Men and Brethen what ſhall we doe?* you muſt either mourn for ſin here, or burn for ſin hereafter; *Sow in tears if you will reap in joy*: And the time of youth is moſt ſeaſonable for this. The ſooner you begin to mourn for ſin, your ſorrow is like to be the leſs heavy, and the more kindly. Your hearts have upon them a natual hardneſs, and if by neglect of repentance they gather a Contracted hardneſs too, they will be broken with the more difficulty. Cuſtom in ſin takes away the ſenſe of it; and the longer you continue in it, the more will you find a ſenſeleſs ſtupidity growing upon your ſpirits. Your Conſciences, that are now tender and timerous, and ſomwhat ſhie and fearfull of ſin, will by degrees grow hard and ſeared, and paſt feeling. Doe you not know this

by

by experience, that those sins which a few years since, were a great terror to you, you can now commit without the least trouble? if an Oath or a Curse had slipt from you, or if you had been overtaken with intemperance, what stings and gripes have you felt after it? but now you are frequently guilty of these Crimes, yet without the least remorse or trouble for them. Therefore now is the time for this work, while your consciences and hearts are tender and free from contracted hardness; for the longer you delay, the more difficult will it be to bring your hearts to this duty. Again, you must forsake sin, your hearts must not only be broken for, but also broken off from sin. *You must repent and turn from all your evil wayes, otherwise iniquity will be your ruine, and you will perish by it*; and the longer you continue in sin, the harder will it be to forsake it. Custom will become a second nature to you, and the *changing of your Course will be like the changing the* Ethiopians *skin and the Leopards spots*. When once sin gets rooting in the heart, and enslaves and captivates the affections, it will be extream difficult to get it out and cast it off. While the *Cockatrice* is in the egg 'tis easily crushed. Before sin gets too much life and strength, you may

Ezek. 18. 30. Luk. 13. 3.

Jer. 13. 23.

with the better ſucceſs oppoſe it, and with the greater eaſe gain victory over it. Now is the time to open your hearts and give entertainment to Chriſt, who is ſaid *to knock* at theſe doors by his Word and Spirit, which you muſt open to him, as ever you expect he ſhould open heaven to you; and become ſubject to him in his Kingdom of Grace, if ever you will reign with him in his Kingdom of Glory. And doubtleſs the fitteſt ſeaſon for it is now in youth, for if you ſhut theſe doors now, you will find them faſt bolted and barred when you are old. Sin in the ſoul is like ruſt in Iron, it renders it unapt to move, though pulled with great ſtrength. The Devil is a ſubtil adverſary, and the longer you permit him to hold poſſeſſion of this Royal fort, the more will he fortifie it againſt Chriſt, and beat off with the more eaſe, whatever aſſaults are made upon you by the Word and Spirit of God. Chriſt will enter moſt willingly, if you will receive him, he deſires it, he ſeeks it, *behold I ſtand at the door and knock*; but if you refuſe, your affections will be more alienated, and hearts more hardened. *Qui non eſt hodie cras minus aptus erit.* If you are not inclined or diſpoſed to God, to Religion, and that that is good, to day, you will be more indiſpoſed

Rev. 3.20.

disposed to morrow: if you are not willing Christ should take possession of your hearts this week, or month, or year, you will be less willing the next. The sooner the better. That proverb is true here, and cannot be crossed, *Blessed is the Wooing that is not long a doing*. O blessed and treble blessed is that Soul, that is early married to its Saviour, betimes espoused to Christ, as its Husband, Head and Lord. Now therefore is the time to gain and flourish in Grace, which is the Earnest of Glory: to set up the *Kingdom of Christ within you*, as ever you hope to be admitted into his Kingdom above you. Luk. 17. 21.

§. 3. An early practice of Piety and Religion will bring you the greatest comfort. A pious Youth makes a joyous old Age. Age is a time, wherein we are to solace our selves with the remembrance of our forepast life, to feed upon the spiritual stores, upon the graces, comforts and Experiences which your former godly and Religious course of life hath gained you. For this reason 'tis that *Solomon* sends the young sluggard to the Ant or Pismire to learn prudence, which *gathereth her food in the Summer, and layeth up her store in the harvest*. If you sleep in harvest, sloth, sin away the summer season, what will you live upon in winter? Prov. 16. 6, 7, 8.

ter? will not ſpiritual want and poverty pinch you in old age? But if thou art Religious in thy youth, diligently carefull to lay up a ſtock of grace and vertue, a ſtore of prayers and good works, in thy youth, then thine old age cannot but be attended with joy and comfort, peace and plenty. You ſay uſually, you muſt work when you are young to keep you when you are old. 'Tis true here, you muſt work the works of God and of Religion while you are young, to ſupport you, comfort you, and keep you from deſpair when you are old. Do but think, what peace, what comfort an old man can have, who is about to leave the world, and hath all the ſins of his youth flying in his face, following at his heels, and waiting when death ſhall give them an opportunity to accompany him to Judgment. When he ſhall remember that in his youth he forgat God, and ſpent the prime of his years in the Devils ſervice, in *ryoting and drunkenneſs, chambering and wantonneſs, in ſtrife and envy*: I ſay, what peace, what comfort can he *now reap of thoſe things whereof he is aſhamed*, wherewith his conſcience is terrified, and ſoul wounded? How loath is he to leave the world, how unwilling and afraid to die? How doth his aged heart ake, his ſhrinked fleſh tremble, to think

think of Death and Judgment? Who can expreſs the horror and diſturbance of his mind, when his Reaſon tells him he is too weak to live, and his Conſcience, that he is too wicked to dye? Whereas, when a man can truly ſay, and his conſcience bears him witneſs when he is old, that he hath laid out his youth and ſtrength for God, in the practice of piety and ſervice of his Saviour, when he can now ſay, he hath made Religion his buſineſs; the glory of God and his own ſalvation his main work and deſign in his youth; when in a word he can ſay with old *Hezekiah*, *Lord remember that I have walked before thee in truth and with an upright heart*; what an heart full of comfort, what a mind full of peace, what a ſoul full of joy ſhall that man have, in old age, even in death it ſelf? How chearful may ſuch an old *Simeon* ſing his *Nunc dimittis*, *Lord now let thy ſervant depart in peace*, for I have ſought, and the eye of my faith hath ſeen thy ſalvation, which thou haſt prepared for me? Therefore if you would be joyous when you are old, be Religious while you are young. *Qualis vita, finis ita.* As is your life, ſuch ſhall your end be. *To me to live is Chriſt, to dye is gain*, ſaith the great Apoſtle: And 'tis *the righteous hath hope*

Iſa. 38.3.

Phil. 1.21.

in his death, ſaith *Solomon*. And you deceive your ſelves, if you think you may live viriouſly and yet dye happily. Holineſs in youth is the Tree, upon which the choyce fruit of Comfort in old age alone groweth.

§. 4. As it will bring the moſt *Comfort*, ſo it deſerves the greateſt *Honour*. To ſee young perſons following Chriſt by an holy and heavenly life, 'tis honourable and deſerves the greateſt commendation. It is written in the Goſpel, that when Chriſt heard a young man ſay, he had *kept the Commandements from his youth*, he *loved* him; to ſhew how God loves the early obedience and devotion of young ones to himſelf. To ſpeak in the Scripture language, God honoureth ſuch, for they greatly honour God, and *them that honour me, will I honour, ſaith the Lord.* Yea and God makes more account and takes more notice of a little goodneſs, a little holineſs and obedience in a young perſon, than of a greater meaſure in him that is elder. When *Jeroboams* child was ſick, God ſent him word by his *Prophet*, that his child ſhould dye, *and that he only ſhould go to the grave in peace of all Jeroboams family, becauſe in him was found ſome good thing towards the Lord.* There could not be much good in him being

1 Sam. 2. 30.

1 King. 14.

ing but a child, and bred up in Idolatry too; yet becauſe ſome good was found in him being ſo young, God took a liking to him, and ſhewed his acceptation of him, by conferring that favour and honour upon him above all the Family, that he ſhould goe to his grave in peace. And *Solomon* tells you, that Religion carrieth *length of dayes* in the one hand, and *honour* and *dignity* in the other; and ſhe will conferre it upon thee, ſhe will bring thee to honour: and the *Lord honoureth them that fear him*, ſaith *David*; where Fear is put for all Religion and Worſhip towards God, and thoſe that devote themſelves to him by an holy fear, will God honour. And the ſooner you doe this, the greater love and honour, the greater favour and eſteem will God have for you. Yea, as it will procure you honour from God, ſo from all good men; Religion and piety is the Image of God in man, and wherever a good man ſees this he cannot but honour it, and thoſe that bear it. St. *Paul* writes to his *Romans*, to ſhew ſingular reſpect to *Andronicus* and *Junia*, as perſons of *Note*, upon this conſideration, becauſe they had the happineſs and honour to *be in Chriſt before him*. And ſurely 'tis the greateſt honour and happineſs in the world, to be early in Chriſt,

Pro. 3. 16.

Pro. 4. 8.

Pſ. 15. 4.

Rom. 16. 7.

early in the Covenant of grace. Is thy Servant in Christ? is he Religious and devoted to God? he is more honourable than thee his Lord and Master, who art irreligious and out of Christ; and shall be preferred before thee in the favour and esteem of God, both in this world and that to come. Nay Religion will make you honourable even in the eyes of the wicked. *Jehoram* a wicked King honoureth and waiteth upon a Religious *Elisha*; proud *Herod* reverenceth the holy Baptist. Piety is a silent but a powerfull Orator, to perswade all that see it, to love and honour it. What *Diogenes* said of Learning, is truely applicable to Grace and Religion, it makes poor men Rich, old men Happy, and young men Honourable. It gives such lasting honour, as the rusty teeth of old Time can never eat out; *the Name of the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.* Would you be truely great, then be sincerely good. For true honour (of which all men are greatly ambitious, *non parvas animo dat gloria vires; immensum gloria calcar habet*; The itch of honour, scratch till the blood come, still abides) is not attained by building of *Babels*, nor by gathering wealth, or adorning your selves with the plumes of pride. *Pharaohs*

Ps. 112. 6.

raohs Horſes may have coſtly Trappings, and the *Midianites* Camels chains of gold: nor yet by being Maſters of miſchief, or notable for ſome act of villany: as he who to get himſelf a name, burnt the famous Temple of *Diana*. Can any man think the dunghill of wickedneſs, a fit Mine to dig an honourable Name from? Or that the only way to make a man ſweet, is to wallow in Jakes's and Kennels? Certainly Grapes grow not on Throns, nor Figs on Thiſtles: Neither is the ſweet Oyntment of an honourable eſtimation, or good Name (which *Solomon* ſaith is better than life) compounded of thoſe ſtinking ingredients, pride, laſciviouſneſs, prodigality, covetouſneſs, intemperance and prophaneneſs. No, the name of the wicked ſhall rot, in deſpite of all Offices, Preferments, Titles, Policies, or favours whatſoever. Their impious deeds, wherein they gloried while living, ſhall be raked up to their reproach and diſhonour, by after ages. *Cains* malice, and *Pharoahs* pride and rebellion againſt God, have hitherto kept pace in the world with *Abels* devotion and *Moſes* his meekneſs. And as the names of the wicked are thus torn on earth, ſo their ſouls are committed to hell, covered with ſhame and delivered over to *everlaſting contempt*. Impiety

Cant. 1. 9. Judg. 8. 26.

Dan. 12. 2.

piety therefore is not the mean to true glory. But the way to true and laſting honour, is to ſeek it by a Religious converſation. A good name ariſeth out of things *true, juſt, honeſt, lovely, and of good report. Famam extendere factis, hoc virtutis opus.* Whoever would be truely famous muſt be really Vertuous. Be faithful, ſober and juſt, honour God and do good, and you ſhall be honoured of God and good men while you live; and when you leave the world, you ſhall leave your name a bleſſing to Poſterity. Your remembrance ſhall be ſweet, your name a perfume, and your memorial pretious. In a word, do worthily in *Ephrata*, and ſo be famous in *Bethlehem*. Vertue and Religion ſhall emblazon thy name, when nothing elſe will, or can. A Field of ſincerity charged with the deeds of piety, cannot but be accompliſhed with the Creſt of Glory.

Ruth 4. 11.

§. 5 Now is the moſt Acceptable time. What the Apoſtle ſaith of the day of the Goſpel, I may ſay of the day of Youth, *Behold now is the accepted time.* The Noontide or Evening of thy life may be acceptable; ſome are received at the eleventh hour. But the Morning is moſt acceptable. God is pleaſed to ſee young ſinners looking and inquiring after a Saviour,

2 Cor. 6.2.

to

to ſee them ſetting out for Heaven betimes, *and ſeeking the Kingdom of God in the firſt place*, before Satan or the World hath raviſhed their Virgin affections. The youngeſt diſciple was the beloved diſciple, and Chriſts firſt care and Command is for theſe, *Feed my Lambs*. O theſe are moſt acceptable and dear to him; becauſe their Graces are moſt viſible and conſpicuous: Early goodneſs is like the morning bluſh, like the firſt opening of the Roſe, like a Diamond ſet in a Ring of Gold. It hath a Delightfull fragrancy and a glorious luſtre, every ones eye is upon it, and every one that is truly godly admires and loves it. As the witty ſpeeches of a pratling Babe are many times more taken notice of, than the grave ſayings of an old *Cicero*, ſo early grace in young converts is more obſerved than in thoſe of gray heads. The beauty of their vertue doth then ſhine cleareſt, and the power of it doth then appear greateſt. To ſee young ones delighted in reading and hearing Gods Word, much in Prayer, frequent at Sacraments and other holy Exerciſes; to ſee young perſons deny themſelves, taking up the croſs and yoak of Chriſt, caſting off the World, mortifying the fleſh with the affections and luſts of it, deafning their ears to all

Joh. 21. 15.

in-

inticements and allurements of pleaſing ſins, adviſing others ſo to do. To ſee them manfully oppoſing and conquering the Tempter in his wiles and policies, following God fully, and with full purpoſe of heart cleaving to the Lord, none but muſt needs take notice of this. The grace of Chriſt in them is ſo powerfull, and the activity of that grace in them ſo lively, that it muſt needs be viſible. And this tending much to Gods glory, muſt needs render them more acceptable. Adde to this, that your ſtrength to ſerve God is greateſt, and your time longeſt; which gives you this double advantage: you may not only eſcape many pollutions in the world wherewith others are defiled, to the diſhonour of God, and wounding of their own ſouls; but you may bring much glory to God in your generations. God hath work enough for you to doe, all tending to his glory and your own ſalvation, throughout the whole day of you lives, though you begin in the Morning of your Youth, and continue very diligent till the weary Evening of decrepit Old age overtake you. I might inſtance in ſome of the chief part of your work; you have a Pardon of ſin to ſue out, Evidences for Heaven to clear, corruptions to mortifie, luſts to ſubdue,

1 Joh. 2. 14.

a treaſure or ſtore to lay up, graces to gain and improve, temptations to reſiſt, enemies to defeat, Relations to mind, and many duties towards God and men to diſcharge; work enough for the whole day; to do all this well, begin as ſoon as you will, as ſoon as you can. And as a Maſter, who hath many ſervants, and a multitude of buſineſs, is beſt pleaſed with that ſervant that goes about his work betimes, and continues at it all day, becauſe he doth his Maſter the moſt ſervice, and brings him the greateſt gain; ſo God, who hath variety of work for his people and ſervants, is moſt delighted with thoſe that ſet to it betimes, and continue diligent in his ſervice to the end. I ſay of all others, theſe are moſt acceptable to God. Gods Firſtlings are his Darlings, for theſe doe him the moſt ſervice, and bring him the greateſt glory.

§. 6. Now is the moſt *ſafe* time in reſpect to your ſelves, your own ſouls. At firſt if you be carefull, no doubt but you may prove ſucceſſefull in this great and weighty concern, ſoul-work, God-work, eternity-work. But if you make delayes, you run your ſouls upon great hazards and uncertainties. There are many dangers and great peradventures in a little delay. Your lives

lives are perfectly uncertain, ſince no age is fenced or ſecured againſt the killing Shaft of Death. Some Flowers are nipped in the bud, ſome ſprings fall into the ſea, as ſoon as they riſe out of the earth. The thred of life in ſome is ſoon cut off; and the candle blown out almoſt as ſoon as lighted. When you walk through a Church-yard, you may ſee little Graves and ſmall skulls, as well as great ones. And you hear of many ſnatched away in the full ſtrength and prime of their years. So that you may dye while you are young; and without piety and grace, be damned while you are young. Therefore 'tis moſt ſafe to become Religious, and ſecure your ſalvation in the firſt place, having no aſſurance of your life for a day, and being ſubject to Death every moment: Nor have you any ſecurity of the means of Grace; though with *Hezekiah* you had a Leaſe of your Life, and for as many years as the longeſt lived Antedeluvian arrived to, yet you have no aſſurance that God will hold the light of his Goſpel to you, to the period of that long day. Now you have means and opportunities, lights and helps, Sabbath upon Sabbath, line upon line, one motion and call upon another, to remember your Creator, to make Reli-

Religion your buſineſs, and to mind Heaven in good earneſt; and if you will not do this now; if you will be idle and unfruitfull, and run the hazard of what God can do, he can and may quickly take away his Goſpel from you, and turn your light into darkneſs; that like the blinded *Sodomites* for *Lots* door, you ſhall grope for the ſtrait gate to Heaven, and not find it. He that can ſweep away thouſands by a Plague, and by devouring burnings lay ſtately Towns and Cities in the duſt, can find out a way to bring a *famine, not of bread, but of hearing the Word of the Lord, ſo that you ſhall run from one end of the Land to the other to ſeek the Word, and ſhall not find it.* Amos 8. 11. I know you cannot be ignorant, that at this very day there are many in *England* that pull hard for it, to take away the Means of Grace and knowledge from you: To take away the written Word, and to give you a Legend to read inſtead of a Bible; The Goſpel of the Virgin *Mary*, or of St. *Francis*, in lieu of the Goſpel of Chriſt; and dumb Idols to worſhip inſtead of the living God. And I muſt tell you, if the youth of this Age, if the preſent riſing Generation don't ſpeedily heighten and encreaſe their regard to Religion, and their eſteem of Gods Word

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and Ordinances, Gods Miniſters and the means of Grace, I fear leſt God ſhould ſuffer thoſe things to come to paſs. For why ſhould God continue that you care not for, and will not improve; but account rather a burden then a benefit? But put caſe none of all this ſhould be, but that the day of your life ſhould be long, and the day of the Goſpel as long as it; yet there is ſtill a further hazard in delay, in regard of the uncertainty of Gods working with the Means: For the wind of the ſpirit bloweth *when* and *where* it liſteth. You may now feel the fair gales and ſweet breezes of the ſpirit moving upon your hearts, and blowing fair for Heaven, and if you do not now hoiſt the ſails, the wind may ſlack, and duller, and you may be becalmed for ever: God may ſay, his ſpirit ſhall ſtrive no more, or ſwear in his wrath you ſhall not enter into his reſt. Now God calls, if you will not hearken, you may call and cry hereafter and he will not hear. *Then ſhall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them. But they refuſed to hearken, and pulled away the ſhoulder, and ſtopped their ears that they ſhould not hear, they made their hearts as an Adamant ſtone, leſt they ſhould hear the Law, and the words which the Lord of*

Pro. 1. 24. &c.

Mich. 3. 4.

Zech. 7. 11, 12, 13.

of Hoſts, hath ſent in his Spirit, therefore it is come to paſs that as he cryed (that is the Prophet) *and they would not hear, ſo they cryed and I would not hear, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* This is ſufficient to caution you to take heed of ſtopping your ears when they ſhould be moſt open and ready to hear. Do you not read of *Eſau*'s weeping for the bleſſing to no purpoſe; of the fooliſh Virgins going to buy Oyle too late; and of our Saviours telling *Jeruſalem*, that her day was ſpent, and thoſe things belonging to her peace were hid from her eyes? And don't theſe ſad examples tell you, that there are many, who have the ſun of mercy ſet to their ſouls, before the day of their lives may be half ſpent? that God ceaſeth to call, Chriſt to invite, the Spirit to ſtrive, and obſtinate ſinners are given over to hardneſs, judicial *hardneſs, and to treaſure up to themſelves wrath againſt the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God*; which is the greateſt judgment on this ſide Hell? And may not this heavy ſentence paſs againſt you when you are old, who wilfully neglect God and Religion while you are young; ſeeing God is juſt and righteous in all this? *Juſtum eſt ut à Deo contemnatur moriens, qui*

Rom. 2. 5.

Act. 28. 26, 27.

Deum Omnipotentem contempſit vivens. 'Tis juſt with God to contemn thee old and dying, who haſt deſpiſed him young and living; not to know you then, who will not know him now; not to accept the blew Milk, when the Devil hath ſucked all the Cream; juſt with God not to accept a Sacrifice from thoſe hearts and hands of yours at death, which never knew how to offer but to *Beelzebub* all your life. Be wiſe therefore and conſult your own ſafety, which lyes in being religious betimes, in following Chriſt by an holy converſation while you are young; then come life, come death, if you have hold by faith but of *the skirt of his garment* you are ſafe, and not before; and 'tis (you ſee) a threefold Peradventure, if you refuſe this now, that you ſhall gain it hereafter. Peradventure you may dye young, peradventure you may be deprived of the means of Grace, or peradventure God may not hereafter work with the means, but leave you to a judicial hardneſs.

§. 7. Laſt of all weigh this: You cannot begin ſo ſoon, but your time will be ſpent by that time your work is done. Young men, if once you become Chriſtians indeed, diſciples of Chriſt in truth, as you enter upon

on a very profitable and honourable, ſo upon a very difficult calling. You have now a very great work lying upon your hands, and but a ſhort time to diſpatch it in, many Irons in the fire, which call for your continual attendance. If you conſider ſeriouſly, in how many Relations a Chriſtian ſtands, and how many duties each of theſe Relations require, you will acknowledge you have time little enough for the diſcharge of them. For how many duties are required of you, as you are creatures to God, how many more as Subjects to a Prince, how many more as Brethren, as Servants, as Maſters, how many more as men, as Chriſtians, in Relation to your ſelves, your own ſouls, in the whole converſe of your lives? Take a review of theſe by ſerious reflection, as every one is multiplyed into many, and then tell me, Whether you can begin to be Holy and Religious too ſoon; whether when your time is gone, you will not wiſh you had begun ſooner, or that you were to begin again, that you might do your work better, doubling your diligence for God and your own ſouls; whether when your life is ſpent, you wil not give the ſame counſel to others that I give to you, and ſay, O remember your Creatour in the days of your youth,

and make Religion and the ſerious practice of holineſs and righteouſneſs your ſtudy betimes? Let me be your Monitor, who know by experience, what a task you have in hand, which calls for all your ſtrength, time and diligence, if you would approve your ſelves faithfull to God. My time is gone, I am dying, and going to give my account, I wiſh I had begun ſooner, and wrought harder after I begun. Therefore mind the words of a dying man, (for ſuch have the beſt and deepeſt Impreſſions of things to come, as well as of things paſt upon their minds) caſt off the world and the vanities of it, *ſeek the Kingdom of God and the righteouſneſs thereof* in the firſt place. This will bring you the ſoundeſt peace and greateſt comfort in old age, and upon a dying bed: This no doubt, will be your advice to others then; be perſwaded to take and follow the ſame now. 'Twill be your honour, your crown, your glory here, and it will bring you to a glorious crown and endleſs hapineſs hereafter.

CHAP. III.

Shewing the many Prejudices Satan raiſeth in the minds of men againſt the Way of Religion.

SAtan, who is the grand Enemy to Gods glory and mans ſalvation, uſeth his utmoſt Power and policy to raiſe a prejudice in the minds of young men againſt the wayes of Chriſt, and the practice and purſuit of what is good. And this he doth by making falſe and unjuſt repreſentations of the wayes of God and Religion.

§. 1. And firſt he reproaches the way of Religion, wherein all the diſciples of Chriſt walk towards heaven and happineſs, as uncertain and doubtfull. Do you not ſee, ſaith the Accuſer, how the profeſſors of Religion and profeſſed diſciples of Chriſt are divided in their Judgments, how many different perſwaſions they are of, and how one party decries the other? One cries this is the way, another that, a third differs from both the former: And every one applauds his own way as beſt and ſafeſt, and exclaims againſt all others as erroneous and dan-

gerous: And how ſhall you, young Novices, of immature parts, ſhort experiences, little reading and weak judgments, know which is right, or which to chooſe? Alas! you are not able to determine; therefore you had as good ſtay where you are, till all parties are agreed, and all parties unite and joyn in one, and then you may venture. Thus he inveigles you to ſtand off from God, upon pretence there is no certain way of ſerving of him agreed upon, and if you take the wrong, you no whit mend the matter, and had as good go on in the way you are in, though it be the way of ſin, which is the infallible road to death and hell. And I would to God the Devil had not ſo much advantage here, as he hath; that he had not ſo juſt ground for this prejudice againſt Religion and the way of holineſs, as he hath, by the many endleſs diviſions, groundleſs factions and different perſwaſions that are amongſt profeſſing Chriſtians, and profeſſed followers of Chriſt. For I am perſwaded nothing doth more ſtartle young ones, and more ſtagger old ones, cauſeing the one to depart from, and the other to keep out of the way of Religion, and from following Chriſt in the way of his Commandments, than the ſhamefull and

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unchriſtian diviſions that are amongſt us. And if God do not (which for his Mercies, his Churches, his Goſpel's ſake I earneſtly begg and hope he will do) unite us, our diviſions in Religion will terminate in the deſtruction of our Religion. For a Family, a Church, a Kingdom divided cannot ſtand, ſaith he, whoſe word ſhall ſtand, when the Heavens and the Earth fail. And theſe Killing Maladies to Religion and ſound practice of piety, every follower of Chriſt, or ſincere Chriſtian ought to bewail, and in his place to endeavour the healing of. But yet this is a vincible prejudice, and to this ſtratagem and wile of the Devil, anſwer may be given.

1. That there is a neceſſity that there ſhould be Hereſies; the Apoſtle tells you ſo, and gives you the reaſon for it, *viz.* *That they which are approved might be made manifeſt.* There are two wayes, whereby God tries his people, and makes manifeſt their ſincerity. One is by Perſecution; when Perſecution ariſeth many Hypocrites drop off, and Formaliſts flinch away from the Truth, and forſake their Religion and the bold profeſſion of it, leaving the ſincere to bear all the brunt and burden. The other is by Error and hereſie: 1 Cor. 11. 19.

And here many that have held out ſome time, fall away, drinking in the poyſon of damnable Errors, to the deſtruction of their ſouls: While the ſincere hold faſt the Truth, and ſtand to their profeſſion, thereby diſcovering what they are; ſound Chriſtians, whom no Perſecutions can alter, or Errors corrupt. So that diviſions are uſeful, not to beat you off from, but to try whether you are firm and well grounded in Religion. And if for theſe you deſert Chriſt and the wayes of holineſs, this is ſo far from vindicating or excuſing you, that it declares and condemns you for diſſemblers and Hypocrites, that have in you no ſincerity or ſtability at all. Beware therefore you do not ſuffer the Devil thus to delude you, and mark you for his own.

2. Beſides, if you reſolve never to be Religious, till all profeſſing Chriſtians are of one mind in Religion, you muſt never be ſo; never ſet a ſtep in the way to Heaven while you live, nor look to enter into the Kingdom of God when you dye; becauſe this is never like to be in this world. If when there were but two brethren in the world, there was a difference, and that about Religion or Sacrificing to God; if in the firſt Chriſtian Churches in the Apoſtles dayes there were Diviſions, when

when the number of Profeſſors was ſmall; now there are many Millions, how can you expect a perfect Union? He that takes up a reſolution neither to eat nor drink till all the Clocks in the Town ſtrike together, or till all the Cocks in the Pariſh crow together, or till all his fingers are of one length, and all the ſpires of Corn or Graſs in the Earth are of an equal height, muſt alſo reſolve to ſtarve and dye. So if you reſolve never to leave the wayes of ſin, never to look after ſalvation by turning your feet into God's Teſtimonies, but to remain Scepticks in Religion, and perfectly unhinged as to the principles of Religion, and practice of piety and holineſs, till there be a ſweet harmony, a perfect Concord and agreement in all things amongſt the profeſſors and followers of Chriſt, you muſt alſo reſolve to dye in your ſins, and periſh everlaſtingly. This trick and prejudice of the Devil againſt Religion is as old as Chriſt, as old as the Goſpel, yet thouſands have been true followers of Chriſt, and are gone to Heaven for all that; therefore let not Satan deceive and ſhut you out, or make you fall ſhort of Heaven by this deluſion. 1 Cor. 3. 3, 4, 5, &c.

3. 'Tis alſo to be conſidered, that though there be ſome difference and diſſen-

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ſion amongſt the ſincere, amongſt the true profeſſors of Religion and followers of Chriſt; yet 'tis chiefly (if not only) in the Modes and circumſtantials of Religion, not the Fundamentals. They are all in the way to Heaven, they differ only about the nearneſs and cleanneſs of the way; ſome ſay this is the pureſt way and ſome that, but they all tend to the ſame place, to the ſame Port, Heaven. Now ſuppoſe two of you were to eat together, and you cannot agree about the ſauce, will you therefore never eat; Or to be cloathed together, and you differ about the trimming only, will you therefore reſolve to wear no cloaths, but to go naked? Why, Ceremonies or circumſtantials are but as the ſauce or trimming to Religion; and ſhall diſagreement about theſe fright you from the ſubſtance? God forbid. Let not Satan thus blind and baffle you of your very reaſon. All true Chriſtians agree in the main; their Journey is for Heaven, and at the end of it there ſhall be peace, concord and harmony never to be broken more. And to guide you in your Journey, you are to obſerve when differences ariſe about circumſtantials and Ceremonies, which ſide the Lawful Magiſtrate is of, and what his Injunctions are in the caſe; which

which muſt bear a great ſway with you. For if it appear not that what the Magiſtrate injoyns, is as clearly ſinfull by the Word of God, as it appears by the ſame Word, Obedience to Magiſtrates is a duty, then you are to obey and joyn with the Eſtabliſhed Church; otherwiſe you neglect a certain Duty for an uncertain, and run upon a known ſin to avoid what is only ſuſpected or doubted to be ſo; which no conſiderate perſon will be guilty of. And certain it is, the Devil could never ſtave you off from being Religious by this wheadle, the Diviſions that are amongſt Chriſtians, if you would but conſult your own Reaſon. For if it be any reaſon to hold out becauſe of differences, then to come in and to be Religious, ſo far as we all agree in Religion, is highly reaſonable. Well, get but this ſtart of the Devil, and you win the Goal. For all the profeſſed followers of Chriſt agree thus far, that all known immoralities and vices are to be forſaken, as leading to Hell and to deſtruction, and that all the moral Duties are to be done and practiſed as the way to Heaven and happineſs. Now be but perſwaded to this, to flee all youthfull luſts, rioting and drunkenneſs, chambering and wantonneſs, curſing and ſwearing, cheating and

and lying, pride and revenge, malice and envy, and oppreſſion and covetouſneſs, which all the ſincere profeſſors of Religion and followers of Chriſt agree to be ſins, and ought to be avoided, repented of and forſaken: And on the other hand, perform all chriſtian duties, which the Word of God plainly requires, conſiſting in devotion towards God, righteouſneſs and charity towards others, and ſobriety towards your ſelves, which all true Chriſtians agree ought to be performed and done, and the force of the Devils argument falls. But becauſe Chriſtians differ in ſome things, which are Niceties, therefore to do nothing in Religion, no not thoſe things wherein they all agree; not to leave thoſe vices which all agree ought to be abandoned, nor diſcharge thoſe duties, which they all agree ought to be done, is highly unreaſonable: This is to grant the Devil more than he asks, and to give him ſuch an advantage, as he could never expect from a rational Creature, much leſs from a profeſſed Chriſtian.

4. Add to all this, that this is a meer Calumny and unjuſt charge of Satan's upon the wayes of God. The way of God and Religion is certain, whatever Satan ſuggeſts to you; and the ſeeming uncer-

tainty

tainty ariſeth from our blindneſs, or difference of ſight. Till we can all ſee with one eye, or all attain the ſame meaſure of knowledge and underſtanding, we can never be of the ſame mind in all things, either civil or religious. How different are men in their opinion, in the ſame trade or calling: Yet the Devil cannot perſwade them to lay aſide their callings and imploys becauſe of this. Wherefore let him not by this prejudice keep you any longer off from your Chriſtian calling: But reſolve for Heaven ſpeedily and in good earneſt; and take the plain way of faith, repentance, and an holy life, which Chriſt in his Goſpel hath plainly preſcribed you; and begg of him to direct and uphold you in it, and doubt not but you ſhall go ſafe to Glory. *For as many as walk according to this Rule, Mercy and Peace ſhall be upon them.* Gal. 6. 16. And to cloſe this Firſt particular, remember this [young men,] whoſe conſciences tell you, your lives are yet irreligious and unholy; and treaſure it up as a ſtrong ſhield againſt this fiery dart of the Devil: That whatever uncertainties or differences Satan may ſuggeſt to be amongſt Chriſtians in the way to Heaven; there is no difference or diſpute about this, that the way of ſin is the way to Hell.

§. 2. Sa-

§. 2. Satan doth prejudice young men (and others) againſt Religion, and ſerious practice of Chriſtianity, by repreſenting it as a reproachfull undertaking, a ſcorned and derided calling; which none but a company of Milk-ſops, timerous women and half-witted men will take upon them. *Have the Phariſees or Rulers believed on him?* what great or wiſe men, what men of repute in the World, what brave or noble ſpirits or minds are there that regard or trouble themſelves with theſe things? and can you brook the loſs of ſuch mens countenance and favour, or endure to be ſlighted and frowned on by theſe? or can you bear the reproach of your old Cronies and aſſociates, that they ſhould *digitis notare*, point at you where-ever you go, ſaying, There goes your convert, how like a Phanatick, a fool, he walks, and looks as if he had neither life nor ſoul in him? This ſaith Satan you muſt expect and meet with, if you will be ſo preciſe and ſingular, and can you bear this?

Joh. 7. 48.

1. Well, be it ſo; Yet to overcome this prejudice againſt Religion and the practice of it, think who they be, that are offended at your new courſe of life, and well-doing: They are the moſt vile, con-

contemptible people in the world, that vilifie the wayes of God, and ſincere followers of his Son; And it is moſt abſurd and ridiculous in them to do it: 'tis as if a man ſhould laugh at the ſhining of the Sun; as if a crooked and deformed perſon ſhould deride one that is ſtraight and beautifull; as if a company of Vaſſals ſhould vilifie thoſe that are at liberty: Yea, as if a company of condemned Malefactors ſhould laugh at all that are not in the ſame condemnation. And therefore their deriſions and reproaches are not at all to be valued or taken notice of.

2. Though you may be reproached for being good, religious and holy, by men, yet you are moſt highly eſteemed of God, and moſt dearly beloved of Jeſus Chriſt. He eſteems you as the moſt excellent perſons here, and will own you, reward and crown you, in the face of the proudeſt ſcorners, at the laſt day. Thoſe perſons you read of in *Heb.* 11. who were vilified and reproached as the Rubbiſh and Off-ſcowring of the world, were the men (ſaith the Apoſtle) of *whom the world was not worthy*. The World, as highly as it thought of it ſelf, and as meanly as it judged of them, was not worthy of their company; and for whom God

Heb. 11. 38, 40. God had provided ſome better thing than the world is. Now having honour and eſteem with God, what need you value the reproach or ſcorn of men? This is but the common lot of the righteous, to be debaſed and vilified by the wicked: *Jeremiah* not worthy to live, *David* the ſong of the Drunkards, *Job* an Hypocrite, and St. *Paul* a peſtilent fellow, and mover of Sedition; nay Chriſt himſelf, who had no ſin in his Nature, and did nothing amiſs in his Life, was vilified and reproached, beyond what you ever were or can be: He was reputed an Impoſtor, a cheat, an enemy to *Cæſar*, a Blaſphemer, a Friend to Publicans and ſinners, a conjurer, who caſt out Devils by *Beelzebub*, the Prince of Devils. And were Chriſt now on Earth, the Hectoring Atheiſts, and helliſh *Iſhmaels* of our time would mock and ſcoff at him. For 'tis not you, but your godlineſs; not you, but Chriſt in you, that they deride and vilifie. Now what Chriſt ſaid of perſecution, is true of deriſion: *If they perſecute me*, deride me, *they will alſo perſecute and* deride you; and ſurely if you have your Maſters fare, you have little reaſon to complain. Moreover, theſe men ſhall one day pay dear for their taunts and

and ſcoffs at the followers of Chriſt, when *he ſhall come in the Glory of the Father, with his holy Angels*, to take vengeance on them for all their hard ſpeeches againſt the godly: When they ſhall wiſh their tongues had had as many bliſters on them, as their Jawes had teeth: wiſh that their tongues had cleaved to the roof of their mouth, yea that they had never been. For they ſhall be now convinced Chriſt was the Butt they ſhot at through your ſides; who will now reward them for what they have done againſt you, or ſaid againſt you, as ſaid and done againſt himſelf. And their bitter ſcoffings ſhall now be turned into helliſh and eternal howlings. Now they would lye at the feet of the meaneſt of you who are found holy in that day, to ſhare with you in your happineſs, if it might be. Therefore when you have any thoughts or Motions of ſerving God and ſetting your faces Heaven-ward, be not diſheartened by this, the reproaches of wicked men. They are not to be regarded, they did the ſame to Chriſt himſelf, you are never the leſs, but the more Eſteemed and Beloved of God, who will ſhortly convince the mad world, who are the moſt worthy, and render to

Matt. 18. 6. Jude v. 14, 15.

them a full and juſt recompenſe of reward.

§. 3. The Devil endeavours to quaſh all thoughts and purpoſes in young perſons, of being Religious, by repreſenting Religion as too difficult and hard for them: Tells them, that the way which is called holy is marvellous uneaſie, and paved throughout with difficulty. As the diſciples once ſaid
Joh. 6. 60. to our Saviour, when they heard him declare himſelf to be the Bread of life; and that they *which did not eat his fleſh and drink his blood, had no part in him. O ſay they, this is an hard ſaying, who can hear it?* So ſaith Satan to young men, when they hear of the neceſſity of following Chriſt, of the neceſſity of being Religious, holy, and walking circumſpectly: O this is a rough way, who can walk in it? There are many harſh ſayings in Religion, which you cannot hear, many heavy yoaks which you cannot bear, and many hard duties which you cannot do. Can you endure to hear of renouncing the world, mortifying the fleſh, and denying your ſelves your youthfull ſports and paſtimes, and all innocent and neceſſary delights and Recreations? To be tyed up to a ſtrict auſtere, preciſe life, living like *Diogenes* in his Tub, or an *Hermit* in his Cell, never

never giving your ſelves liberty to pleaſe your ſelves in one ſinfull action, in one gracefull Oath, gainfull Lye, or wanton dalliance? can you go bound hand and foot, and tongue-tied all your days? can you hear theſe ſayings, and truckle to theſe intolerable reſtrictions? You can never bear it, never brook it, to continue conſtant in a way ſo difficult. Is not the way you are in, where you have all the liberty you can deſire, much better? Are you not greatly imprudent to be bound, who may go free? Free from the ſeverities of Religion, and niceties of holineſs, which the way of wiſdom is made up of, and which all the followers of Chriſt muſt daily and hourly obſerve, or elſe they can have no peace night or day? Thus doth this helliſh adverſary, by his wiles, wind himſelf into the hearts of young perſons, that he may gain upon them, and win them to his will, to their eternall perdition, if they yeild to him. But to obviate ſo great an evil, be alwayes prepared with theſe, or the like Meditations.

1. That the moſt difficult things, are the moſt Excellent. *Difficilia quæ pulchra*; difficulty implies excellency; the way of Religion though difficult, is excellent.

1 Cor. 12. *ult.* Rev. 15.3. Prov.3.17. Prov.8.32. Pſal. 110. 24, 25.

cellent. 'Tis called a *more excellent way*. 'Tis the way of truth and righteouſneſs, a way of peace and pleaſantneſs, a way of pleaſure and delightfulneſs, yea a way of glory and happineſs. And what difficulty will not men go through to obtain things excellent? what hazards and hardſhips do men expoſe themſelves to for Silver and Gold, for Pearls and Diamonds, and ſuch things as are excellent in the worlds eſteem. So grant there be ſome difficulty, in following Chriſt, yet oppoſe its excellency to its difficulty, that it will bring you to honour, peace, plenty, to a Kingdom, a Crown, *to Rivers of pleaſures, and a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, and you will yet conclude it the beſt choyce you can make. 'Tis alſo abſolutely neceſſary you muſt walk in this way, if ever you will be bleſſed or happy in this world or that to come, and this you are convinced of.

Heb. 12.2.

2. Adde to this, that the difficulty lyes not in Religion, but in your own luſts, that clog and hinder you in your Chriſtian courſe, called by the Apoſtle *that weight which ſo eaſily beſets us*. Let a man who hath fetters on his feet walk in never ſo ſmooth a path, yet he complains; whereas were he free from theſe, he could

go

go chearfully on, making no complaint of the way at all. So though the way of Gods Commandments be never ſo delightfull and fair, yet while you are clogged with the weights of ſin, and fetters of your luſts, no wonder you find ſome tedioufneſs and difficulty in it. But as the Apoſtle exhorts, *lay theſe aſide*, and you will find this way ſo pleaſant, that you will walk in it with great delight, with much pleaſure, and without much complaint. And the greater progreſs you make in it, the more eaſie and delightfull will it be to your ſouls; as it was to St. *Paul*, who met with as rough a path in Religion, and as great difficulties in following Chriſt, as you are like to meet with; *yet he delighted in the* Rom. 7. 22. *Law of God, after the inward man*, that is, the new man. This way was once as croſs and difficult to St. *Paul*, as it can be to you; yet afterwards it was his delight. 'Tis true, as St. *Paul*, would not ſo; that ſlothfull, lazy part, thy old man, will never take pleaſure in Gods ſervice, but thy new man will. Wherefore let not Satan deceive you, by his falſe impoſitions on God and Religion. For what difficulty is, ariſeth from himſelf and your own ſins. Were you in ſome meaſure

rid of theſe, and love to them, the practice of Religion would be more pleaſant and eaſie than the Devil repreſents it to be. For the divine power and grace will aſſiſt and ſtrengthen you in it; which is able to make this difficult way delightfull, this crooked, thorny way (as Satan and ſin make it) ſmooth, ſtrait and plain before you. Chriſt hath as much power now as ever, to make the blind to ſee and the lame to walk. God by the powerfull aid and influence of his holy Spirit and Grace, can make thoſe feet that have been ſwift in the wayes of ſin, nimble and ſtrong in the way of holineſs; thoſe hearts of yours which have been raviſhed with the pleaſures of ſin, the delights and vanities of the World, he can as ſtrongly and powerfully incline to delight in his Commandments. He can give you new wills, affections, deſires, new aims, purpoſes and ends; ſo that you ſhall tend Heaven-ward, mind religion, and follow the example of his Son Jeſus Chriſt with great readineſs. He can make the ſevereſt precepts pleaſant, the hardeſt part and moſt difficult duties of Chriſtianity delightfull to your Souls; yea his whole ſervice perfect freedom. Nor is God only able, but willing to this;

Nay,

Nay, he hath promiſed to help by the aſſiſtance of his Spirit; *the Spirit of truth will guide you.* Chriſt will be your leader; and God hath ſaid he will write his Law in your hearts, take away your natural enmity and indiſpoſition, and give you a ſutableneſs of heart and ſpirit, to *walk in his ſtatutes, and to keep his Judgments and do them. Having therefore theſe precious promiſes, cleanſe your ſelves from all filthineſs both of fleſh and ſpirit, and perfect holineſs in the fear of God*; never doubting, but that your ſincere endeavours ſhall prove ſucceſsful; and that there is no difficulty in the way to Heaven, but the divine aſſiſtance and your own diligence will carry you through it.

Joh. 16. 13. Luk. 1. 79. Jer. 31. 33. Ezek. 36. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 7. 1.

3. And whereas the Devil would diſcourage you by ſuggeſting great difficulty in the way of Religion, know 'tis far eaſier than the way of ſin. 'Tis eaſier to follow Chriſt than the Devil. The yoak of Chriſts commands is eaſier and lighter than the yoak of Satans injunctions, whoſe ſervants and followers are all drudges, perfect ſlaves and Vaſſals; but Chriſts ſervants are Freemen, ſet into a glorious liberty, and are ſtiled Freemen, *a ſervant and yet free*, ſaith the Apoſtle. There is not ſuch an expreſſion in all the Book of

1 Cor. 7. 22.

God concerning a ſervant of Satan or ſin. And when you have a while accuſtomed your ſelves to the exerciſes of Religion, and wayes of Wiſdom, you will be of *Solomons* mind, that (compared with the bondage and drudgeries of ſin) *her wayes*
Prov. 3. 17. *are wayes of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace.*

§. 4. And leſt this ſhould prove too weak, and frail, he hath another, like it and not leſs powerfull, ready at hand; how Unpleaſant the wayes of God are: Not only ſtrawed with difficulty, but deſtitute of all delights. If once you embrace Religion, you muſt ſhake hands with all earthly felicity; you muſt never look for a merry hour more. Will you believe a great Religioniſt, one, who had all the advantages a Kingdom could afford to make his way pleaſant, yet complaines
Pſal. 73. 14. *how he was plagued all the day long, and chaſtened every morning. That tears were his repaſt day and night, and he water'd his couch with his tears.* Cries out of wounds and broken bones, and want of reſt. He found this way ſo unpleaſant, as to imbitter all the pleaſures and delights that a Scepter and Crown could yield. And it is no where recorded, that the great Founder of Religion, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, ever laughed,

laughed, but wept frequently: and the ſame may be ſaid of all his followers. And can you diſpenſe with this? That all your laughter ſhould be turned into monrning, all your joy into heavineſs, and all your Mirth into Lamentations. Continual experience tells you what a company of Mellancholy perſons Chriſts Diſciples are, and how they cenſure and find fault with all that are not like themſelves; and can you take any pleaſure in their ſociety, who muſt be your conſtant companions?

1. Here this wicked warrier makes his paſs very home, yet with a little conſideration you may eaſily put it by, without any dammage at all. Indeed you muſt repent of ſin, if ever you will be ſaved, and your ſorrow, in ſome meaſure muſt laſt as long as life laſts, becauſe of the continuance of ſin: You muſt mourn for ſin here, or burn for ſin hereafter, where you ſhall mourn without meaſure, without profit and without end. So that here the Father of lyes ſpeaks ſome truth. The Diſciples of Chriſt muſt be mourners; Math. 5.4. mourners for ſin, though he conceals that ſuch are pronounced bleſſed by Chriſt: But withall here is a great Lye couched under this little truth: *viz.* that in the ways of ſin you ſhall meet with no ſorrow, which

which I ſay is a huge lye: for in the way of ſin, there is no avoiding ſorrow. Your Pride croſſed, expectations fruſtrated, the world failing, afflictions and croſſes coming unexpectedly upon you, will cauſe great ſorrow and anguiſh of mind. Theſe things the Religious and holy man can bear with much patience and chearfulneſs, but they are an heart-breaking to others. For if the world frown upon you, and friends forſake you, as they did *Job*, in affliction and trouble, who have you to ſmile upon you, or to comfort you? God will not; *his wrath is revealed from Heaven againſt all the ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men; and he is angry with the wicked every day*: Satan cannot; this Maſter whom you ſerve, will torment you then, vex and grieve you then, by adding to and aggravating of your miſeries; but (as you commonly ſpeak) the Devil a bit of comfort muſt you expect, or ſhall you receive from him. No, young men, be not thus deluded: A ſinfull courſe is and will be a ſorrowfull courſe; it will bite like on Adder and ſting like a Serpent in the end. The wages Satan gives for all the ſervice you can do him, is ſhame, reproach and ſorrow. And is not Godly ſorrow for ſin, which worketh ſalvation,

on, better than ſorrow by ſin, which endeth in damnation? Is not that ſorrow or kind melting of the heart by a ſweet ſenſe of Gods love, which will yield more ſolid delight and pleaſure to your inward man, than ever you found in the wayes of ſin, much more Eligible than ſorrow that worketh death? Then 'tis better to be Gods ſervant, then the Devils ſlave.

2. Beſides, this is a real ſlander caſt upon Religion, that there is no pleaſure to them that purſue and practiſe it. The faithfull ſervants of God and diſciples of Chriſt, are not required to throw away all comfort and pleaſure in Creature-enjoyments. God doth no where command you to leave them but only injoynes the prudent and moderate uſe of them; the contrary to which breeds more bitterneſs in the diſappointment, than ever it yielded ſweetneſs to any in the enjoyment. Religion allows eating and drinking, though not to gluttony and drunkenneſs; affords you to take a ſubordinate comfort and delight in food, rayment, friends and poſſeſſions; and herein more true delight and comfort, by ſweetning theſe enjoyments with the mercy, love and bleſſing of God, than ever you could find in them before: for before you enjoyed the Crea-

Creature only, now God with the Creature. Therefore Chriſt is not ſo ſevere a Maſter as Satan repreſents him. He is bountifull enough to his ſervants, allowing them not only for neceſſity, but delight;

1 Tim. 6. 17. *Gives them all things richly to enjoy*, with Chriſtian moderation. He doth not command *David* to throw away his Harp, nor Chriſtians utterly to abandon all mirth and pleaſure, but to take and uſe it in due

Eccleſ. 9. 7, 8. meaſure and ſeaſon. *Eat thy bread with joy* (ſaith God) *and drink thy wine with a merry heart*. What can you deſire more? Religion gives you leave to be merry, though not to be mad. It allows you ſo much pleaſure and delight as will do you good, and no more; and to deſire more than this, is prodigious folly and madneſs.

3. Grant that all ſinfull delights muſt be denyed, yet God promiſeth other and better delights in exchange, and I hope there is no wrong or injury in this. Are not thoſe joyes which affect and refreſh the Mind, preferable to them which only ſtir the Spleen? Thoſe joyes, which ariſe from this ſure hope of an enduring Subſtance, are they not better than thoſe joyes which ſpring from the embraces, the feigned and fancied embraces of a ſhadow? what think you

you of ſpiritual, heavenly joyes and delights? If you will throughly forſake the wayes of ſin, and works of Satan, and heartily embrace the practice of Religion, carefully endeavouring an imitation of Chriſt by an holy life, with conſtancy and reſolution, you ſhall find ſuch ſweet peace and freſhing joy flowing from the ſenſe of Gods love, the light of his countenance, communion with him in his holy Ordinances, and in the hope of the beatifical viſion hereafter in heaven, as the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and pride of life could never afford, nor the greateſt ſenſualiſt ever boaſt of, or pretend to. And whatever ſorrow you have for ſin, whatever griefs, afflictions or loſſes you may be expoſed to in this life, for the ſake of Religion, they ſhall laſt but a while, a little while, and in the end be turned into the fulleſt joy. *Sorrow may continue for a night, but joy cometh in the morning; you may ſow in tears, but you ſhall reap in joy, you may go forth weeping, yet bearing precious ſeed, yet you ſhall* certainly *return again rejoycing, bringing your ſheaves with you. This light affliction, for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* Which text alone is ſufficient to wipe off this prejudice of Satan againſt

Pſal. 126. 5, 6.

2 Cor. 4. 17.

againſt Religion, and to make you ſtrictly Religious in good earneſt.

§. 5. There is but this one objection or prejudice more (that I ſhall mention) which Satan hath to diſcourage you from following of Chriſt. He repreſents it as a thing exceeding *perilous* and *dangerous*. O ſaith he, you cannot follow Chriſt, but you muſt run your ſelves upon great hazards and dangers: you may loſe all you have for your profeſſion; if perilous times come, your Religion may coſt you your Eſtates, Liberty, nay your very Lives; and is it not better ſleeping in a whole skin, and to ſave all, then hazard and loſe all for an humor and fancy, of which you may repent, when it is too late?

1. As fierce as this Lyon in the way appears, yet you need not be frighted, if you will remember, that as great loſſes attend you in the ways of ſin, as in the way of Religion: In reference to your Eſtate, which you may loſe for the ſake of Chriſt, (which you ought not to reckon upon) yet you ſhall be no looſer in the end. And whatever your profeſſion may coſt you, Sin may coſt you as much. Some mens luſts are more expenſive to them, than other mens conſciences are to them. And if you ſhould loſe your worldly comforts, yet

yet you may have never the leſs comfort in the world. For if the ſtream fail, the fountain cannot. You may fetch comfort from above, if you have none below. And uſually the leſs comfort the ſinner hath from the creature, the more the Soul hath from God. The treaſure of grace in your hearts, and your hope of glory in Heaven none can take from you; and therefore whatever you loſe of worldly wealth for Religion, ſhall be abundantly recompenſed in things of an higher nature; elſe that divine promiſe muſt fail; *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you, there is no man hath left houſe,* &c. *for my ſake and the Goſpels, but he ſhall receive an hundred fold now, in this time, and in the world to come eternall life.* Whence you may make this Orthodox Parodox; no man ever loſt by Chriſt, who was a loſer for Chriſt. Then for your Liberty, though men ſhould caſt your bodies into a Priſon on Earth, yet they cannot caſt your Souls into the priſon of Hell. If they ſhould throw you into a Dungeon, they cannot ſhut Chriſt out of that Dungeon, or hinder the light of his countenance from ſhining there. If they take away your Civil liberty, they cannot take away your ſpirituall liberty. They may exclude you

Mark 10. 29, 30.

Gods

Gods Houſe and publick Ordinances, but they cannot debar you the throne of Grace. Keep Friends from you they may, but cannot hinder God from viſiting of you with the ſenſe of his love, and pledges of his divine favour, which will make the cloſeſt priſon a delightfull palace. And as to Life it
Math. 10. 28. ſelf, know, *that though men may kill the Body, yet they cannot kill the Soul.* The argument our Saviour uſeth, to perſwade you to fear God more than man. So that ſuppoſe the worſt that can come, that men do go to the uttermoſt link of their power, which is to kill the body, why dye you muſt, and dye you may while you are young; and can you dye upon a better account, than for Chriſt, and for Religion? certainly, none in the world dye with more peace and comfort, with greater joy and triumph over death than they that dye Martyrs for Chriſt, dye for the ſake of Religion and a good conſcience. So that all the wrong the enemies of God and his truth can do you is, with *John Baptiſt* and St. *Steven*, to give you a quick paſſage to Glory, and ſend you with the more ſpeed to Heaven,
Phil. 1.23. to Chriſt Jeſus, which is far better. I beſeech you therefore reſolve upon it, to follow Chriſt, and ſecure the ſalvation of your immortal ſouls, whatever it coſt you.

Hearken

Hearken to none of theſe objections of Satan againſt Religion. For if once he can prejudice you againſt what is good, he will ſoon, by another aſſault, draw you to the practice of what is evil.

CHAP. IV.

Several Temptations of Satan whereby he ſeeks to draw young perſons to his own ſervice, the ſervice of ſin.

§. 1. SAtan having bid fair to barr you off from what is good, his next attempt is to allure you to evil. Being prejudiced againſt Gods Service, he prompts you next to his own: In which method as he is very ſubtil, ſo oft-times very ſucceſſefull. As he that would gain another mans ſervant to himſelf, decries the ſervice he is in as laborious, ſlaviſh and unprofitable, and withall commends his own as full of, and attended with all good properties; ſo doth Satan to gain ſouls, not only reproach and diſcommend the Service of Chriſt, but cries up and applauds his own. Five objections he hath made againſt Religion and the

practice of it, and he hath as many temptations drawing to the way and practice of sin, the first whereof is this.

§. 2. 1. The delight and pleasure of it; nothing so delightfull and pleasant as sin; none enjoy so much pleasure and content as his servants. Will you take it (saith Satan) upon the word of *David*, who was forced to acknowledge this, and to leave it upon record in Divine Writ, that my servants Psal. 73. 1. to 7. *are prosperous, there are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men. Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish.* Where do you find such a commendation of Religion or the service of God, as *David* here gives of my service, saith the Tempter? And huge cunning he is in the management of this temptation, that it may take effect. For he labours what he can to conceal from your eyes those more excellent, pure, spiritual delights and pleasure, which Religion procures to the Soul, both here and hereafter. And withall hides from you the sting and bitterness of sin; covers the hook, guilds the pill, that the sorrow, the vexation and torment which sin will procure to you in the conclusion, may not be descerned, nor so much as once

once ſeriouſly thought of. He would not for a world (could he prevent it) you ſhould read and believe that of *Job*; *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the iniquities of my youth*: Or that caveat of *Solomon*, *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, walk in the wayes of thine heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgment*: Leſt you ſhould know and conſider how dear you muſt pay at laſt for ſin, and ſo be diſcouraged from his ſervice. And ſtill to give his temptation the greater force, he repreſents the delights of his ſervice, the pleaſures of ſin, as preſent; that they may be had daily and without difficulty, and ſo ſecret too, as no mortal eye ſhall take notice of you. Such ſins, and ſinful delights may you enjoy, and indulge your ſelves in, and no body e're the wiſer. You may be frequent and bold in them, none can know it, or call you to an account for it: All which is marvellous taking, hugely tempting. What, preſent pleaſure and private too! ſweet delights and ſecret too! who would refuſe them? And that he may be ſure not to fail of his end, he hath yet a farther ſtratagem; that is, to plough with your own Heifer, to joyn with the luſts of your own hearts (with which he

Job 13.26. Eccl. 9, 11.

holds a ſecret correſpondence) to propoſe ſuch objects, and wayes of ſin, as are deſirable and ſuitable to your natural temper and inclination. He knows 'tis the pleaſure of ſin you are betwitched with. As *Eve* of old was captivated with the pleaſantneſs of the forbidden fruit; ſo her children and poſterity are naturally taken with the ſame bait. This therefore is the firſt commendation of his ſervice, and firſt temptation to ſin, the delight and pleaſure of it.

Gen. 3.6.

2. Now to reſiſt and overcome this temptation, be prevailed with, to take into your ſerious thoughts and remembrance what follows. That the pleaſures of ſin (how full and fair ſoever Satan repreſents them) are really low, mean, empty, thin and unſatisfying. *Solomon* gives you the ſumme and full of them in few words, and that upon experience; *Childhood and Youth are vanity*; that is, the delights and pleaſures of that age are vanity, yea vanity of vanity. And can you be ſatisfied, with a bauble, with an *ens fictum*, with the meer notion of a thing? nay they are not only empty and unſatisfying, but ſenſual and brutiſh. And though theſe delights may a little gratifie your ſenſual appetite, yet they can never ſatisfie the rational part of man

Eccleſ. 11. 10.

man, his ſoul. The Devil and luſt may promiſe fair, and pretend full ſatisfaction to the mind in the commiſſion of ſuch a ſin, but ever fall ſhort in the performance. I ask the greateſt Epicure, the moſt voluptuous perſon that is in the world (and if he will be true to his own experience) let him tell me,

1. Whether he ever found that pleaſure and ſatisfaction in any vice, that Satan promiſed and he expected? Let the ſin or vice be what it will, yet did it ever yield that pleaſure in commiſſion, that it did in ſpeculation?

2. Whether the choyceſt of his ſinfull pleaſures hath not in a little time brought trouble and wearineſs to his ſpirits?

3. Whether this trouble and wearineſs is not more grievous and irkſom, than ever the ſenſual act was pleaſant and delightfull?

4. If amongſt the choyceſt and chiefeſt of his delights, in which (as he conceives) he finds moſt ſweetneſs and pleaſure, he ſhould have but one delight without variety and change, whether that delight would not ſoon loſe its nature, and become a very torment and burden to him? As ſuppoſe the Drunkard were alwayes bound night and day to his cups, the

Glutton to his table, the Sluggard to his Bed, the Miſer to his Bags, or the laſcivious Wanton to his Minion, would not this be more irkſom than delightful? and would not his former contentment become a continual torment? Therefore theſe pleaſures are unſatisfying; the reaſonable part of man, the ſoul, cannot ſit down or reſt contented with them; nor with any thing elſe beneath God, by whom and for whom it was created.

2. Though this temptation is of great force, yet before you ſtrike the bargain and *engage* your ſelves to the Tempter, ſit down again, and conſider a while the ſhortneſs of theſe pleaſures, and you will find them upon this account very inconſi-
Heb. 11. 25 derable; *They are but for a ſeaſon.* What the Apoſtle ſaith of ſome meats, is true of
Col. 2. 22. all the pleaſures of ſin, *they periſh in the uſing.* Some periſh in the enjoying; and thoſe that are moſt durable quickly flee away. Like a cloud or vapour, if not blown away by the wind of adverſity, they quickly vaniſh of their own accord. If the ſtormy wind of outward affliction doth not ſuddenly puff out the fancied blaze of the young mans joy,
Eccleſ. 12. 1. yet the dayes of old age are drawing on, *in which he ſhall ſay he finds no pleaſure.*

Or

Or to be ſure, ſo ſoon as the hand of death ſhall give the tree of life a ſhake, theſe fair bloſſoms fall all at once. And there will be none of theſe delights in another world.

3. Before you make too firm a contract with this boaſting Maſter, 'tis good to know what Wages he gives. And that he may not decieve you, take it from a better hand than his. *The wages of ſin is death*; death that is oppoſite to eternal life. Death that compriſeth all in it that is wofull and miſerable; more ſorrow than ever you had joy, greater pain and torment than ever you found pleaſure or contentment in the wayes of ſin. Believe it (young men) ſin in the temptation hath a different aſpect to what it hath in the reflexion. In the former it looks pleaſant and fair, in the latter horrid and foul. For beſides the ſtings and laſhes that ſinners have in their ſecret retirements, when they are under affliction, or under any danger or apprehenſion of death and judgement, there are many intolerable and remedileſs horrors to follow in another world, as the proper conſequents and juſt wages of a ſinfull life; which miſeries, if they were but as obvious to the ſenſe now, Rom. 6. 21, 22.

as the pleaſures of ſin are, they would be infinitely more powerfull, to take you off from ſin, than all the temptations of the Devil are, or could be, to draw you to it. And methinks men who call and profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, ſhould walk a little by Faith and not wholly by ſenſe; and believe future things as certain (upon the Divine aſſertion and revelation) as if they really were, and and you already felt them. Which if you really did, the Devil could never perſwade you to forſake God, who rewards his ſervants *with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, to ſerve him whoſe wages are preſent ſhame and ſorrow, and hereafter a far more exceeding and eternal weight of miſery.

2 Cor. 4. 17.

§. 2. Next to this, he thinks it not amiſs to recommend his ſervice to you for the *Glory* and *Utility* of it.

1. As to the Glory of it; nothing (ſaith Satan) gains men ſuch repute and honour in the world, as this. He hath his curſed Angels and Agents to commend vice with the higheſt *Elogiums*; and thoſe that are moſt bold and daring, and can arrive to the higheſt pitch and degree in ſin, ſhall have the greateſt accumulations of honour, and higheſt acclamations of bravery of ſpirit. Who bear greater

greater ſway, or obtain fairer plumes of honour in the world, than my followers? A ſuggeſtion mightily taking with Young men; unleſs they ſhall conſider, That Sin hath no repute, except it be among the vileſt perſons, the Devils own ſervants and drudges; whoſe eſteem of it renders it the more abominable and odious. You never heard any commend ſwearing, drunkenneſs, whoredom, covetouſneſs, or any vice, but ſuch as lived and allowed themſelves in the practice of it; whoſe commendation makes them and their ſins the more vile. And were there ſuch real repute and credit in ſin, what need is there to put it under the mask of vertue to render it acceptable? why is this, but becauſe any vice appearing in its proper and native hue, and owning its right name, ſeems monſtrous and ſhameful? The holineſs of God is his moſt glorious perfection, and therefore ſin (which is directly contrary thereto) can have no real glory in it. And that is the glory of a man, wherein he reſembles God, and whereby he gains favour and eſteem with God, and is this by ſin? Doth not God behold ſinners afar off, and hate all the workers of Iniquity? and doth not all the repute and glory men get by ſin and impiety, end in the greateſt ſhame and

igno-

ignominy? can that deſerve the name of creditable and glorious, which diſhonors God, aboliſheth his Image in man, defiles the ſoul, beſots the reaſon, enſlaves the whole man to the prince of darkneſs, and inevitably brings upon all the practicers of it eternal contempt and reproach in the day of the Lord Jeſus? Surely then Satan ſaith more of his ſervice, than the ſinner can ever expect to find.

2. Nor doth it yield that Utility or profit, that the tempter boaſts. Though he ſticks not to tell you, that ſuch ſins, as lying, cheating, defrauding, oppreſſing, griping and over-reaching, will afford you huge emolument and advantage. You will find them greatly profitable and enriching. Hereby you may in a ſhort time command the world, live plentifully, and provide largely for your Family. Thus joyning with Covetouſneſs and worldly-mindedneſs, and that deſire men have to uphold and maintain their luſts, Joſh. 7.21. he prevails with them to become his ſervants. Hereby it was that *Achan* was tempted to take the Silver and Gold and Babyloniſh Garment, which God had expreſly forbidden; *Gehazi* to receive the talents and change of raiments of *Naamans* 2 King. 5. 20, 23. ſervant, which his Maſter had refuſed; *Ahab*

to

to conſent to the Killing of *Naboth*, for his Vineyard. *Judas* to betray his Maſter for the Thirty pieces of Silver; and *Demas* to forſake the truth, and cleave to this preſent world. *Auri ſacra fames*; ſuch is the ſacred hunger of Gold, that men are drawn almoſt to any courſe of ſin, to gain it. Nay Satan doth not urge only the conveniency of his ſervice in this regard, but the neceſſity of it too. The neceſſity of ſuch and ſuch ways of ſinning, without which you can never thrive or get any thing conſiderable in the world. And there is none of thoſe, who profeſs themſelves the ſtricteſt followers of Chriſt (ſaith he) but know theſe things are ſometimes neceſſary, and if they can have an advantage this way, will take it, and they muſt do it, or they can never live in the world. So that I perſwade you to nothing (ſaith Satan) but what is both convenient and neceſſary, and what thoſe very Religious men themſelves will and muſt ſometimes do for their gain and profit. And can any thing be ſaid againſt this? Yes, the Apoſtle ſaith enough againſt it, to conquer any temptation to it. *Covetouſneſs is the root of all evil, it pierceth through with many ſorrows, it draws men into hurtfull*

1 King. 21. 4. 6. Matth. 26. 15. 2 Tim. 4. 10.

1 Tim. 6. 8, 9, 10.

full luſts, yea, it drowns them in perdition and deſtruction. Weigh and conſider theſe words of the Apoſtle, and then tell me,

1. Whether there can be ſuch Utility and advantage in the Devils ſervice, as he tells you there is? whether there be ſuch conveniency in unlawful gains, or in any unlawful and indirect means and courſes to get gain? Is it convenient to be entangled in ſnares, and drowned in perdition and deſtruction? Is it convenient to make ſhipwrack of faith and a good conſcience, to load your ſouls with guilt, and to pierce your hearts through with many ſorrows? Are theſe things (which are the attendants on ſin by this temptation) more gainfull or more hurtfull? Is it convenient or profitable for a man to ſteal a Garment infected with the Plague, which will bring death almoſt as ſoon as warmth to him that wears it? Will it be advantageous to gain any thing with the wrath and curſe of God? No; wherein then lies the gainfulneſs of the Devils ſervice? Nay ſhall you not loſe as well as get by it; or compared together, will not your loſſes be greater than your gains? you may perhaps by ſuch and ſuch ſins gain a little

little earth, vanity, *Gold that perisheth*, and *Riches that take to themselves wings and flee away*; these are your utmost gains. But what are your losses by sin? what think you of the *favour of God, which is better than life*; of peace of conscience, which is a continual feast; of Heaven, which exceeds all the Kingdoms of the Earth; and of your own souls, which are of more worth than the world? what think you of grace here and glory hereafter, the choycest treasures, the fullest pleasures, being durable, inexhaustible and eternal? These are the losses you are like to sustain. Now put them into the ballance together, and try whether your gains by sin will outweigh your losses by it: if not, I hope you will not be tempted by Satan to your own loss. You will slight that Chapman that bids you to your loss for any worldly Commodity; and why not Satan who is so desirous to be trading with you for your souls; but bids you to your loss, less than the commodity, infinitely less than your souls cost? And though he proffers ready mony, present gain (as he saith, yet) what comfort will this afford you, or what good will this do you, when you come at the end of your lives, to cast up your Accounts, and find the Devil hath cheated you, you are infinite

Math. 16. 26.

finite loſers, and eternally undone by the bargain? Theſe things conſidered, you will find there is no ſuch conveniency in the Devils ſervice, no ſuch utility or profit by it as he pretends.

2. Then as to his plea of Neceſſity, know, there can be no Neceſſity to ſin, though thereby you may get gain, worldly gain. Duty is neceſſary to all, but ſin can never be neceſſary to any. *There is one thing neceſſary*, ſaith our Saviour, and what is that? to get the world over the Devils back? or to provide for the body by unjuſt and ſinfull means? No, to provide for the ſoul, gain Heaven, *to ſeek after thoſe things that are not ſeen, which are Eternal, and to lay up ſuch a foundation againſt the time to come*, upon which you may build that ſure hope of future happineſs as will never make you aſhamed. This is needful; but it can never be neceſſary or needfull to live in a courſe of known ſin, thereby to make proviſion for the body. It were better to ſtarve the body, than damn the ſoul; better to be poor on Earth, than to be ſhut out of Heaven; better to loſe this life (if it were poſſible) a thouſand times over, than fall ſhort of eternal life, though we were ſure to gain the world by it. Becauſe this gain will in no wiſe countervail or recom-

compenſe that loſs. Upon a mature deliberation therefore, and juſt judgment of things, you will find Satan as great a deceiver in this propoſal, as in any of the former. There can be no neceſſity for ſin, or the leaſt utility or profit by his ſervice.

§.3. Another Wile which Satan finds exceeding ſucceſsfull and winning with young perſons is, to leſſen ſin, to ſuggeſt the ſmallneſs of it. As *Lot* ſaid of *Zoar*, is it not a little one? ſo ſaith Satan of this or that ſin, is it not a little one, a trick of youth, a ſmall fault, next to none at all? If it were blaſphemy or murder, adultery, robbery, inceſt or any ſuch hainous crime, there might be juſt ground of ſcruple and fear; but an officious lye, a petty, gracefull oath, a light curſe, or a little Levity now and then, this need not fright you. Small matters, and not many, nor often neither, what need you boggle at theſe? theſe can never hurt you, or injure you in the leaſt. But young men, the welfare of whoſe immortal Souls and Eternal good I earneſtly deſire to promote and further in the Lord Jeſus, beware of this aſſault and Wile of Satan, and

1. Conſider that no ſin is little or ſmall in its own nature. Some ſins are greater than others, but all are great, all are breaches of

of the juſt and holy law of the mighty God of heaven and Earth; and that which hath an infinite object cannot be ſmall. *Eadem eſt rotunditatis ratio in nummulo exiguo, quæ eſt in magno*: There is the ſame reaſon of roundneſs in a ſmall piece of money as is in the greateſt. The ſame reaſon of ſin, in the ſmalleſt ſins, as in the greateſt; becauſe committed againſt the ſame Law of the ſame God. St. *James* ſaith, *Whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all, for he that ſaid, Do not commit adultery, ſaid alſo, do not kill*, &c. If you do refrain from ſome ſins, yet if you commit others; if you refrain ſwearing, but make no conſcience of lying; refrain ſtealing, but art guilty of cheating; refrain open or actual murder, but yet art guilty of malice; you break and contemn the whole Law of the ſame God; and you are equally liable to the wrath of God and curſe of the Law, with thoſe that live in the practice of the moſt notorious crimes; and without infinite mercy and an hearty repentance, theſe ſins will damn thy ſoul, and the greateſt can do no more. Therefore there is no ſin ſmall in it ſelf, and if the Devil tell you there is, he is a lyar. But ſuppoſe it true that the ſin you are tempted to, in compariſon of ſome others, be ſmall; yet this

Jam. 2. 10, 11.

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in ſome reſpects aggravates the offence, if you ſhall yield to the temptation. When a man will forfeit the favour of his Prince for a trifle, it argues a great ſlighting of his favour. So the leſs the ſin, the greater your contempt of Gods love, which is thereby forfeited: Our Saviour ſaith, *What ſhall it profit a man to gain the world, and loſe his ſoul?* What ſhall it profit you to loſe Heaven and Happineſs, to loſe God, the chiefeſt good, for the greateſt ſinfull profit or pleaſure? But when you ſhall loſe and forfeit all this for nought, for a ſmall ſin, a very trifle, for that which (as you ſay) is not worth ſpeaking of, this argues great folly, and is a marvellous aggravation of your ſin.

2. Though Satan ſeems ſo modeſt and fair at firſt, asking but little things, yet he will not reſt there; but if he finds you yielding, he will proceed further, and prompt you on to the commiſſion of greater. As the habits of grace ſo the habits of ſin are ſtrengthened by degrees. Though the beginnings are ſmall, yet in a little time you will find a great encreaſe. Rivers at firſt ariſe from ſmall ſprings, which by running increaſe to deep and irreſiſtible ſtreams. So actual ſins, (for I ſpeak not of Original corruption, the fountain whereby

the former are fed) in their firſt beginning are but ſmall, but by daily practice increaſe and ſwell, carrying the ſinner with a ſtrong ſtream towards the ſea of divine wrath. If the Tempter finds you make no conſcience of ſmaller ſins, his game is fair before him, and he knows right well how to play it to his beſt advantage: For he will propoſe ſin to your thoughts, and tell you 'tis no great matter to think, thoughts are free. And if he can make you dally with ſin in your thoughts, then by delightfull thoughts of ſin he lays ſiege to your wills, and tells you 'tis no great matter to deſire, or wiſh, ſo long as you do not act: And the chief fort of the will being gained, the leſſer forts of the affections quickly yield themſelves. And having entertained and lodged ſin in your hearts, he tempts you to proceed further, to vent it with your lips: Words are but wind, and your tongues are your own, you may and ought to ſpeak. And then, as there is opportunity, he prompts you to practice: Go on a little further, the ſin is ſweet, try but once, put one ſtep in the way, you may return at pleaſure if you like it not. And having yielded ſo far, it may be with great reluctancy and ſmitings of conſcience, yet when theſe are off, he comes again, and tells

tells you it cannot be worſe, try once more, till at length you begin to commit ſin with delight and eaſe, yea with greedineſs and reſolution, nay with hardneſs and obſtinacy; and now you are fit for any ſervice Satan can require of you, or imploy you in. Thus,

3. The Devil draws men on to the greateſt ſins, by tempting them at firſt to ſmaller evils. *Nemo repentè fit turpiſſimus.* No man arriveth to the higheſt degrees of wickedneſs on a ſudden; but is drilled on ſtep by ſtep, from one degree to another, by the Devil and his own luſts, till by degrees the reverence of God is leſſened, the juſtice of God ſlighted, the will more inclined, the heart more hardned, the conſcience more ſeared, the habits of ſin more ſtrengthned, the Devil more encouraged, and the ſinner at length wholly captivated.

4. And have we not daily too many ſad inſtances of this proceeding and dealing of Satan with men? How have ſome men by yielding now and then to the uſe of a ſmall Oath, ſo perfectly learned the Language of hell, that they can hardly ſpeak without ſwearing; ſo wofull is the gradation of ſin, and the ſly method of Satan with the ſinner, as St. *James* ſets it forth, *firſt tempted, then enticed, then drawn aſide, then luſt brings forth ſin, and ſo proceeds to finiſhing.* Jam. 1. 14, 15.

How? Thus: Sin hath its conception, that's delight; its formation, that's deſign; its birth, that's action; its education, that's cuſtom; its perfection, that's a reprobate ſenſe, and the next ſtep is Hell. So you ſee whither ſmaller ſins will bring you in the end: Therefore, *Obſta principiis*, &c. *Excluditur facilius quam expellitur. Seneca.* 'Tis eaſier to keep out vice, than to turn it out when once entred: Eaſier to refrain ſin at firſt, than to reform it afterwards. Small breaches at firſt are eaſily ſtopped; but let alone till they become great, they often prove irrepairable. Weigh theſe things aright, and the force of this temptation falls.

§. 4. The laſt Temptation to ſin, is the hopes of future Repentance. O, ſaith Satan, you are young, you may allow your ſelves ſome years of pleaſure and delight; and when you are old, then repent and make your peace with God, and all is well. To reſiſt and conquer this aſſault, I referr you to what went before, *page* 29, to *page* 35. where you may ſee the great hazards you run by continuing in ſin upon this conſideration: There being nothing more uncertain than Life; nor any thing more groundleſs than hopes of future repentance, where there are preſent purpoſes and reſolves to ſin.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Wicked men joyn with Satan in this evil deſign to diſcourage young perſons from being Religious.

THat ſo few young ones follow Chriſt or mind Religion ſeriouſly, is partly from wicked men, Satans inſtruments and Agents, who (like their grand imployer the Devil) vilifie and reproach the profeſſors and followers of Chriſt. Satans deſign now on foot is, if poſſible, to deride and ſcoffe Religion out of the world, by repreſenting the profeſſors and followers of it as a company of vile and inconſiderable men. This I ſay is his deſign; and certainly, ſince the Goſpel was preached, he never had more to help it forward. 'Tis a thing too common for any to be ignorant of it, to hear wicked men

§. 1. Repreſent and decry the Religious party in the world, as illiterate, rude and unlearned, avouching that Religion is regarded by none but ſuch. When they ſee a young perſon following of Chriſt, ſeeking after Heaven, or but that way inclined, they preſently cry out to him as the *Scribes*

and *Phariſees* did to thoſe Soldiers that were ſent to take Jeſus, *Are you alſo deceived? which of the Rulers have believed on him?* Do the wiſe and great men of the world walk in this way? Certainly if this Goſpel way, this following Chriſt, and being ſo Religious and precise, were ſo needfull or delightfull, ſo deſirable or profitable, as the preachers talk, the wiſe and Learned men of the Age (who are beſt able to judg of the true worth of things) would embrace it and follow it. But alas they ſee no ſuch excellency in it. And will you be deceived by a company of ignorant, illiterate ſots, that know not light from darkneſs, or good from evil? We hope you are wiſer than to make theſe your guides, or to dance after their pipes. This is the language of Satans Ambaſſadours, and factors for Hell: In anſwer to whom you may eaſily reply,

1. That this way, which they ſo much vilifie and decry, was firſt preached and recommended to the the world by Jeſus Chriſt, *the great counſellour* (as *Iſaiah* calls him) *the Wiſdom of the Father*; *in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledg*; who had more wiſdom and underſtnding than all the learned Rabbies and profound Doctors in the world: He I ſay came

came down from Heaven to reveal this way to the ſons of men; and was the greateſt Prophet that ever was upon the face of the Earth: And his followers, the Apoſtles, though Fiſhermen at firſt, and illiterate as to humane learning, yet they received from Chriſt ſuch extraordinary gifts of the holy Ghoſt, as made them skilfull in all languages, and imparted to them ſuch meaſures of true wiſdom and underſtanding, as all the writings of men could never teach them: And that Doctrine which both Chriſt and they preached to the world, was confirmed by many apparent and undeniable Miracles, whereby it was manifeſt that it came from God, who is Knowledg and Wiſdom it ſelf. Therefore Religion had not its riſe and beginning from illiterature or ignorance, as theſe men ſuggeſt; For God was the founder and impoſer of it, not man.

2. Then for the following Ages of the world, there have been as learned, as wiſe and knowing men Religious and Zealous followers of Chriſt, as any that were otherwiſe. The Antient Fathers that lived near to the Apoſtles time, and in the following centuries of the Church, they were the very Compendium and living Library of all true learning: And theſe by their wri-

tings left behind them, do give evidence to the world, they were zealous Profeſſors and defenders of the Chriſtian Faith and Religion. Yea and at this day, there are perſons as knowing and deeply skilled in all learning and knowledge, who are ſincere followers of Chriſt, and hearty approvers of Religion, and the practice of Godlineſs, as any that ſerve Satan and tread the paths of ſin and unrighteouſneſs. And that there be any (as no doubt there are ſome) learned men in the world prophane, irreligious, atheiſtical, ſcoffers at Chriſt and Religion, it is from a juſt judgment of God upon them, giving them over to ſtrong deluſions to believe a lye, becauſe they have imployed their gifts and parts not for, but againſt the Truth.

3. And for thoſe ſincere profeſſors and followers of Chriſt, and practicers of Religion, which are of an ordinary rank in the world, and ſo may want the advantage of humane Learning; yet they are endowed with ſpiritual knowledge and Divine underſtanding: Though they are not ſo well read in the writings of men as others, yet they are better read in the writings of God, the holy Scriptures; which are the well and fountain of all ſaving knowledg, and able to make a man wiſe unto ſalvation;

tion; Though they are not taught by men the Mysteries of Nature, yet they understand the Methods of Grace, and Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven; which is far better; Therefore it was the saying of a Father (who wanted not humane Learning) that he preferred one plain saying of St. *Paul*, before all the Eloquence and Rhetorick of the Schoolmen. Besides I might add, that it makes for Gods Glory to choose such as are unlearned, and to work by these his great designs and ends amongst men, who will give God the sole praise of whatever they have, receive or do. Now can it be amiss to remember here, that in the Judgment of Wisdom it self, there are none (how rich soever they may be for humane Learning) so void of Wisdom and understanding, as the irreligious and wicked man? Therefore are such so often styled Fools in Holy Writ. The religious and the wise man; the wicked and the foolish man, are convertible terms in the Logick of the Holy Ghost. *Solomon* puts this infamous title of Fool upon the irreligious and ungodly above fifty times in his books of *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*. And you know what *David* records him to be, that *saith in heart, There is no God.* And what

St. *Jerom.*

what that Senſualiſt was in the judgment
Luk.12.20 of Chriſt, who took up his reſt and felicity in his worldly enjoyments, with the neglect of Heaven and Religion, the way to it. On the contrary therefore, it muſt needs be an argument of the higheſt reaſon and deepeſt underſtanding, to own a God, to love him ſuperlatively, and ſerve him faithfully, with a deſire and deſign to enjoy him eternally; in the fruition of whom the rational ſoul is fully ſatisfied and compleatly happy. This may ſuffice in anſwer to this Cavil of ungodly men; That none regard Religion but the ignorant and unwiſe. For whether he that ſerves God, or he that ſerves him not; whether he that ſaves his own ſoul, or he that damns it for ever, be the wiſer perſon, judge ye.

§. 2. The profeſſors and Practicers of Religion are reproached and cryed down, as proud, ſingular, ſelf-conceited perſons, who think themſelves wiſer than all the world beſides, affecting a needleſs and ſingular preciſeneſs, making the way to Heaven much narrower than it is; as if there was no way to Heaven, but what they chalk out: And as if Religion conſiſted in demure looks, a ſet countenance, and fanciſull words and Phraſes of their own coyning; and in a ſpecious ſhew of piety diſtinct from

all their Neighbours: In a word, as if there could be no real mirth or muſick to the ſoul, but by dancing after their Pipes. This is the language of Satans Emiſſaries, whereby they diſcourage and prejudice young ones againſt the ways of God and Religion. Though (take the whole, and) there never was any thing more truely a Cavil or ſlander than this: for,

1. The ſincere profeſſors of Religion and followers of Chriſt are Humble perſons, and the more exact followers of him, the more humble ſtill; who was humble even to a miracle, and commands his Diſciples to be like him, ſaying, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* Therefore his diſciples muſt be humble; men that have the higheſt eſteem of God, and meaneſt of themſelves: The leaſt of Saints, the chief of ſinners, ſaith the choſen Veſſel. Indeed they have high, very high aims and deſigns, are greatly ambitious and aſpiring perſons: With *Luther*, they cannot be content with any portion God can give them in this world: but as St. *Paul*, count all loſs and Dung. They cannot ſatisfie themſelves with traſh and vanity, with earthly riches or honours, with ſenſual delight and pleaſures, or ſuch mean and inconſiderable nothings; but they muſt Math. 11. 29.

be

be all Kings and Princes; they are ambitious of being made the Sons of God, and ſo heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, and
Rom.8.17. joynt heirs with the King of Glory. And if you call this pride and Ambition, 'tis ſuch as is lawfull and commendable, yea neceſſary to every one that would be ſaved. But withall, they retain the meaneſt and loweſt thoughts of themſelves, think themſelves leſs than the leaſt of all that mercy and truth that God hath ſhewn them, unworthy of the ſmalleſt favour from God; and not only unworthy of Heaven, but moſt worthy of Hell, if they had the deſert of their ſin.

2. As to their ſingularity and preciſeneſs, we muſt yield it, that the ſincere ſervants of God and Diſciples of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, are the moſt preciſe or exact men in the world: And 'tis becauſe
Eph. 2.15. they muſt be ſo; *See then that ye walk ἀκριβῶς preciſely*, exactly. But they do not affect more than is neceſſary, more than God commands. The way to Heaven is not of their chalking out, but Gods; nor do they deſire to make it narrower than God hath made it. Our Saviour tells you what
Math.7.14. the way is, *'tis ſtrait and narrow*, ſaith he; and his followers dare not blot this out of their Bibles (as the looſe world would have

have it) leſt God ſhould blot their Names out of the book of life. They dare not do as the moſt do, for fear of going to the ſame place of endleſs miſery, whither the moſt are haſting apace. They know they muſt be ſingular, elſe they cannot be ſincere; that they muſt be ſeparated from the world, elſe they cannot be joyned to Chriſt; and that they muſt be circumſpect, elſe they cannot be ſaved; that they muſt walk in the narrow way, and enter in at the ſtrait gate, there being no other way to Heaven. Therefore their circumſpection and ſingularity is abſolutely neceſſary.

3. Adde to this, that theſe preciſe men, whom the wicked vilifie and reproach as ſingular and proud, are Gods peculiar people. For ſurely (*young men*) God hath a people ſomewhere in the world. The Devil hath not got all, Chriſt did not dye in vain. *God hath a peculiar people, a choſen generation*, who love, ſerve and honour him here, and ſhall live and reign with him hereafter: And where are theſe to be found, if not amongſt theſe circumſpect walkers? The ſervants of God, the heirs of Glory, are ſaid in Scripture to be a peculiar people, an holy Nation, an hearing, praying, watchful people; a people painfull, induſtrious, meek, mer-

mercifull, patient and fruitfull, and full of good works; and all this in ſincerity. Now where ſhall we look to find out this people? Muſt we look into Stews and Brothels, rake the Kennels and Sinks of the Earth for them? ſhall we cull out the ryotous and drunken, the ſwearers and lyers, the covetous and oppreſſors, the profeſſed Atheiſts, profane Hectors, and Debauchees of the world, and ſay, Here they be: Here be the men, that are no Hypocrites, no preciſians, no proud ſingulariſts or Phanaticks: Theſe are that royall prieſthood, that holy Nation, that peculiar people, that ſhew forth Gods praiſe, and promote his honour in the world: Theſe are the meek of the Earth, the pure in heart, the Zealous followers of the Lamb, the ſons of God and the heirs of glory? I am perſwaded, both your reaſon and conſcience tell you, theſe cannot be the men. Why then you muſt ſhew further who or where they are, or elſe acknowledg at the laſt, that if God hath a people in the world, they are amongſt thoſe whom Satans Inſtruments ſo much reproach and decry, and would have you ſhun as men infected. Wherefore let not their bawling prevail with you to offend againſt reaſon and conſcience both:

Since

Since you are convinced, that the people whom they vilifie, are the persons whom God loves, and that sooner or later you must be of this number, or you can never be saved.

§. 3. But besides all this, wicked men stick not to endeavour to Lessen your esteem of and regard to Religion, by representing the Religious part of men as factious, seditious, and disobedient to Magistrates, whom God hath commanded them to obey. Who are they (say they) that foment all the broyls and Rebellions in States and Kingdoms, and make all the fatal rents and schisms in the Church, but those persons who profess themselves the followers of Christ and favourers of Religion, refusing subjection to Govenours, whom God hath set over them? Surely, as there never was any calumny or aspersion more foul, so never any more false than this. And I shall not stick to assert,

That none are, none can be more truly and conscientiously obedient to Civil Magistrates, in all their lawfull Injunctions and commands, than the servants of Christ. The best Christian is the best Subject. None so treacherous and disloyal to their King, as those men who are disloyal and treacherous to God and their own Souls.

'Tis

'Tis very hard for a wicked man to be a good Subject. I am of St. *Peters* opini-
1 Pet. 2. 17. on, that a man must *fear God*, before he can truly *honour his King*. You must learn the duties of the first Table, before you can make conscience of the duties of the second: Learn your duty towards God, before you can rightly perform your duty towards man; the former being the ground of the latter. Now all the true children of God, and sincere followers of Christ have learned thus much, to fear God and keep his commandments; and know, that if in things lawfull and honest they disobey man, they dishonour God and break his commandments: Which are, *That we obey every ordi-*
Rom. 13. 1, 2, &c. *nance of man for the Lords sake: Obey the powers that be; for the powers that be are ordained of God; whosoever therefore resisteth the powers, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation:* Therefore they *obey for conscience sake*; whereas others may be subject for *wrath* or for *interest* sake, they are subject for *conscience* sake. So that he who is most faithfull to the King of Heaven, will be most faithfull and true to his Vicegerent on Earth. Therefore this is but a calumny raised against the Religious and righteous, and made use of by Satans Instruments to bring

Re-

Religion into contempt. And 'tis no more than what their Lord and Master met with, of whom it was said, that he *forbad to pay Tribute to Cæsar.* And St *Paul* was accused as a person disloyal, a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition. 'Tis true, when men command any thing directly sinfull or repugnant to the divine command, they are bound to obey God rather than man: Rather to displease man, than to dishonour God and wound their own consciences. Yet even then their Religion teacheth them (after the example of their blessed Lord) patiently to suffer what the Governours shall think meet to inflict upon them, for their supposed or imputed crimes; and whatever they suffer, not in any case to rebell; for that were to seek relief, by that which they know to be sin. And though some have been found great Rebels to Civil Magistrates, who were also great professors; yet 'tis certain, they were no more than professors: For had they been sincere Christians, and made real conscience of obeying the Gospel, or following the example of Christ himself, they dare not have done it: Since both our Saviours example and the Gospel he hath left us, plainly tell us, we must obey them that have the rule over us, and that upon no

leſs penalty than damnation. To cloſe this reply therefore to his cavil, if you would be Religious, ſhun the ſociety of wicked men, who make it their buſineſs to reproach Religion. Say to theſe as *David*, *Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the commandments of my God.* Wherein the Pſalmiſt plainly implies, and intimates, that evil doers diſcourage and impede us in our devotion, obedience and duty towards God, hinder men from keeping Gods commandments. And you muſt ſay to them, Depart, if you reſolve to be Religious and keep the commands of God.

Pſ. 119. 115.

CHAP. VI.

The general corruption of the Times, together with the natural corruption of our Hearts, are great Impediments to Religion in Youth.

§. 1. THe general corruption of the Age doth Satan make uſe of as an argument to vice, and diſcouragement to Vertue and Religion. The moſt go the worſt way, and young men are apt to think, company is good, the more, the

the merrier; they ſhall fare as well, as others; and going with the moſt, they ſhall have feweſt to blame and find fault with them. The force of which temptation would abate, if you will but conſider, that though the multitude, or generality of men (in the times we live in) be vitious, and ſuch as would Hector God and Religion out of the world, and eſtabliſh Atheiſm and prophaneneſs in their room, if poſſible; yet this is no argument for you to follow them, but the contrary rather: For their multitude renders them ſuſpitious. The Church of God and ſincere followers of Chriſt are but a little, little flock: And the greater part run on in the broad way, that leadeth to deſtruction. Your danger is never the leſs for your great company. He that ſins with a multitude, ſhall ſuffer with a multitude. *Though hand joyn in hand, the wicked ſhall not go unpuniſhed.* Multitude, power, or greatneſs of men, will be no ſufficient apology to God. For then the ſinners in the old world, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, had been excuſable, for they were by far the greater number. But their example is no warrant for your imitation. For you and I and all Chriſtians are to walk by the rule of Gods Word, and not

1 Joh. 5. 19.

Exo. 23. 2.

by the example of men, any further, than it conforms to the divine precept. St. *Paul*, as good and holy a man as he was, durſt not propound himſelf an Example for others to imitate any otherwiſe than thus; *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Chriſt.* And therefore if they be not followers of Chriſt, whatever their number be, or greatneſs, or power be in the world, you are not to be followers of them. No, re-
Pro. 13.20 member what *Solomon* ſaith, *a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed.* You know who the wiſe-man means by Fools, and he doth not ſay, if they be not ſo many, or ſo great; but be they never ſo numerous or proſperous, a companion of them ſhall be deſtroyed. Therefore do not bleſs your ſelves, that you walk in the common road, in the broad way, wherein the moſt go, as if this were any commendation or ſafety to you; for *præſtat ſolus ſapere, quam cum aliis inſanire*; It is better and ſafer to be good alone, than to be wicked with a multitude. *Elijah* was better alone, than if he had joyned with the Prieſts of *Baal*. *Luther* better alone (though 'tis ſaid of him, *Unus homo ſolus totius Orbis impetum ſuſtinuit*; he was the man, that alone bore the violence of the whole world) than if he had joyned affinity with the pompous and

numerous

numerous train of *Rome*. And *Athanasius* was better alone, than if he had sided with the numerous and blasphemous *Arians*. So you are better alone (if you could be so in this way) following of Christ in the practice of Religion and holy obedience, than if you should herd with the generality of men in the ways of sin and unrighteousness. Therefore, there is no weight at all in this argument, the Most do thus, therefore do you so too; unless you can be perswaded to imagin and believe, 'tis better to be eternally miserable with a multitude, than eternally happy with a smaller number. Jer. 17. 9.

§. 2. Your own Hearts, which the Prophet tells you, are naturally very bad, very corrupt and blind, not apt to see or be sensible of your need of Christ, and misery without him; or to discern the beauty of holiness, the joy, peace, comfort and satisfaction that is to be found in the serious practice of Religion and service of God; nay, which are averse to, and have a natural antipathy (enmity saith St. *Paul*) against God and his holy commands. These hearts, I say, are like so much tinder, ready to take every spark of prejudice which Satan and wicked men strike against the ways of Christ: They cannot be more ready to suggest evil, than your corrupt hearts

Jam. 1. 13, 14. are to receive it: which made St. *James* ſay, Then men, when they are tempted, are drawn aſide by their own luſts. His meaning is, Satan may tempt, and wicked men may entice, but neither can compell or force men to ſin; but as they are drawn away by their own hearts luſts, and voluntarily yield to the temptation. And therefore if you would conquer the laſt and greateſt enemy to Religion and your own Salvation, hearken not to the exceptions and prejudices of your own evil and corrupt hearts, againſt an holy and Religious life. Sometimes your hearts will tell you, Religion is only a fit of melancholy; ſometimes that the laws and commands of God are too ſtrict, too hard and difficult; and that the pattern propounded in the Goſpel for your imitation, the holy Jeſus, 'tis impoſſible for you to imitate or follow: And why ſhould you ever think of impoſſibilities? Now if you ſuffer theſe or any other prejudices to prevail, you quaſh all purpoſes and endeavours to be holy at once. To prevent this therefore, ſearch your hearts frequently, and watch them narrowly. Often look home to thy heart, and examine its ſincerity or hypocriſie. Ask where its affections are, and if you find theſe attendants on the ſoul roving, recall

call them; or that your heart harbours any evil gueſts, as ſinfull thoughts, ſtrange notions and apprehenſions of God, Religion, or a future ſtate; expell them, ſuffer them not to lodge there. And doing this daily, watch or keep *your hearts with all diligence, for from them are the iſſues of life* or death. Theſe are they, that will make you friends or enemies to Religion; Therefore watch them carefully. And thus diſcharging your part, earneſtly begg of God to do his, to change and renew your hearts: *To take the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and to give you hearts of fleſh,* Crave of him, humble, pure, underſtanding hearts, hearts inflamed with love to Chriſt, and eſtabliſhed in this reſolution, to follow him to the utmoſt of your power in an holy life, and ſo to continue ſtedfaſt to the death, whatever the iſſue be. So ſhall you be religious in good earneſt, account Gods ſervice perfect freedom, follow Chriſt with great delight, and finally enjoy him for ever in his heavenly Kingdom.

Pro. 14. 23.

Ezek. 11. 19.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing that Religion is Rational; and the ways of Religion, take them at the worſt, are better than the wayes of ſin, take them at the beſt: that is, conſidered with their preſent Concomitants and future Conſequents; or preſent Delights and future Rewards.

THat this Eſſay may not ſwell to too great a bulk, I ſhall offer but two things more to your thoughts, which may prove as ſtrong ſhields againſt all the temptations of the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil; and as powerfull motives to an holy and Religious life, as any before mentioned: Namely, the Reaſonableneſs of Gods Service, or of Religion, and its excellency above the ways of ſin.

§. 1. That Religion is Rational, or the ſervice God requires of us, is highly reaſonable. This St. *Paul* affirms: *I beſeech you brethren by the mercies of God, that ye preſent your bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reaſo-*

Rom. 12. 1.

reaſonable ſervice. Where he exhorts his *Romans* to a Religious life, becoming the Goſpel, or to conſecrate and devote themſelves to Gods ſervice, in tranſlated and borrowed ſpeeches or words from the offering of Sacrifice: And tells them, he would not have it ſeem to them an hard ſaying, or an unreaſonable requeſt, that he enjoyns them to be thus holy, and to ſerve God with all the powers of their ſouls and bodyes. For whatever they might think, or Satan might be ready to ſuggeſt to the contrary; yet be you aſſured, the offering up to God this willing, living, and holy Sacrifice, is but what is juſt and right, and what in reaſon you ought to do; τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν, 'tis but your reaſonable ſervice. Now if you will ſhew your ſelves men, this argument muſt needs prevail with you: *That Religion is Rational.* Though ſome things in it be above reaſon; yet there is nothing required in it, but what is highly reaſonable. *Are not my wayes equal,* Ezek. 18. *ſaith the Lord?* Why what is juſt and 25. equal, muſt needs be reaſonable. If ever men do things rational and becoming themſelves, it is upon ſerious thought and due conſideration; upon which *David* tells Pſal. 119. you, he betook himſelf to Gods ſervice, 59.

and

and turned his feet unto Gods teſtimonies. And is it not ſaid of the Prodigal, *that when he*
Luk.15.17 *came to himſelf, he returned to his Father?* while he was hairbrain'd, mad and inconſiderate, beſide himſelf (as it were) he went on in his riotous courſe after his harlots; but when he came to reflect, to conſult his reaſon, he quickly comes to this reſolution, *I will return to my Father.* Hence Religion in Scripture is called Wiſdom, and the Religious man the wiſe, the knowing and the prudent man. And ſin is ſtyled Folly and Fooliſhneſs, and wicked
2 Theſ.3.2. men *Fools and Unreaſonable.* Now to make this more apparent, we ſhall conſider the ſeveral parts of Religion, as the *Credenda*, *Agenda* and *Speranda*: thoſe things which Religion requires us to *believe*, *do* and *hope* for; all which are highly rational, or agreeable to Reaſon.

Credenda. §. 2. To begin with the *Credenda*, or what Religion requires us to Believe.

1. As that there is a God; this is the firſt principle in Religion, the firſt thing Religion requires our belief of. *He that*
Heb. 11.6. *cometh to God, muſt believe that he is,* ſaith the Apoſtle. And is not this highly rational, to believe a God, a firſt Being, who gave being to all other things in Heaven and Earth? why did *David* ſtyle him *a*

Fool

Fool who ſaid in his heart, there is no God; if it were not agreeable to reaſon to believe there is one? If you conſider the whole world and all the parts of it, can any man in reaſon think they came together by Chance? if you caſt your eyes up towards the Heavens, and take a view of the compaſs of thoſe vaſt Bodies, conſider the glory of the Sun, the light of the Moon and Stars, the beauty, order and exact motion of them all, continuing ſome thouſands of years without error, diminution or interruption: Or if you look downward upon the Earth, and conſider how it is founded and faſtened without prop or pillar, and made to hang in the middle of the Air; how it is compaſſed with waters, which ſwell above it; is interveined with Rivers, covered with graſs and herbs; inriched with ſundry choyce and vertuous Minerals; beautified with flowers, and furniſhed with all manner of fruits, neceſſary for man and beaſt; is it ratonial to think, that all this is by chance? Is it by chance that things in their own nature moſt contrary, as hot and cold, moiſt and dry, fluid and firm, ſhall all conſpire to the advantage of the Creature, as to their common ends? Is it by chance that the Springs do feed the Rivers, the

Rivers

Rivers the Sea, the Sea the Clouds, the Clouds the Earth, the Earth the Beasts, and the Beasts Men? Surely a man, when he sees a fair House or goodly Ship, which is made of many pieces of timber, iron, stone, *&c.* which grew in several parts of the Earth, may as reasonably conclude, that these several parts did of themselves meet together by chance and make up that Building or Vessel, as believe that the goodly frame of the Heavens and Earth, with all things that are therein, were made and put into that order without the wisdom of a great Creator. This first thing then to be believed, is highly rational, *viz.* That there is a God.

2. That this God, this first Being or Creator, is the chiefest good. And is it not reasonable also to believe this? There is in every man an innate desire of good. Psal. 4. *Who will shew us any good?* is the harmonious inquest of all mankind. And that there is a chief good, the light of Nature and Reason teacheth us. The Heathen believed *quod sit*, though they could not agree *quid sit summum bonum.* And our experience will tell us, this chief good is not in any thing here below: 'Tis not in Riches, or Honours, or Pleasures, because all these are both uncertain and unsatis-

ſatisfying: Therefore 'tis rational to conclude, it can be nothing beneath or ſhort of him who hath made all things both in Heaven and Earth; and hath breathed into man this ſpark of deſire after good, which nothing can extinguiſh; nor any thing but himſelf fully ſatisfie. Thus far then Religion is reaſonable in what it requires us to believe, that there is a God, and that this God is the chiefeſt good.

3. That this God hath made all things in this lower world for ſome End. Is it not rational to believe this? who is ſo irrational, as to think a wiſe man ſhould ſpend many years in contriving ſome Engine, or other excellent piece of art, and be at vaſt coſt to accompliſh it, but he hath ſome end in it? So certainly, the great and eternal Wiſdom hath deſigned Man and all other Creatures which he hath made, to their particular Ends; as appears by that propenſity and appetite which he hath imprinted in their natures towards that end, as the main point and ſcope of their being. And what ſhould this end be, but (as *Solomon* tells us) his own glory? This is alſo rational to believe, that God made all things for himſelf, and more eſpecially Man for his ſervice; and all other things to be uſefull and ſer- Prov. 16. 3.

ſerviceable to man; and man to admire and adore his Maker, to ſerve and worſhip him in a peculiar manner. That of the Prophet looks this way; *I have cre-*
Iſa. 43.1.7. *ated him for my Glory.* Here is both the Author and end of mans Creation. The Author God, *I have Created him*; the End, *for my Glory.* And it is greatly reaſonable to believe this. For how abſurd is it to think, that God ſhould ſet up this admirable houſe of the viſible world, and put man in poſſeſſion of all, and yet expect no Rent from this Inhabitant, no fealty from this Tenant? To conceive that God ſhould make a body ſo curiouſly wrought in the lower parts of the Earth; Embroyder it with Nerves, Veins, Arteries and variety of proportion and parts (miracles enough between head and foot to fill a volume) and enliven this body with a ſpark of his own fire, a ray of his own light, an Angelical, Heaven-born ſoul, endowed with all faculties of Will, Memory, Underſtanding and Reaſon, and ſuch high perfections, befitting it for the ſervice of its Creator, and ſend this Excellent Creature into the world, making all things therein ſubject to him, meerly to eat, drink, ſleep, buy, ſell, and purſue ſinfull delights and pleaſures? Certainly the wiſe

God

God had an higher and nobler end and design in framing and fashioning Man with so much cost and care: Namely, the serving and glorifying himself, *who hath so fearfully and wonderfully made him*; and so plentifully and richly provided for him. And therefore the *Jewish Talmud* propounding the Question, *Why God made man on the Sabbath-Eve?* gives this answer, That he might presently enter upon sanctifying the Sabbath; and so begin his life with the worship of God, which was the chief end and reason of his creation. Whereas if God had not intended man for an higher end than eating, drinking, sleeping or taking his pleasure, which is the life of a Beast, then brutish principles had been sufficient for such Brutish ends and practices. The soul of a Beast might have served his turn: But since God hath made man an intelligent Creature, and given him a reasonable soul, which no other creature in this world hath, 'tis reasonable to believe he hath made him for an higher end, than the other Creatures. And those who will help the weak eyes of nature by the glass of Scripture, cannot but see the Makers end in mans excellency. It is written in such broad letters, that God made Man to serve him, and

shew

ſhew forth his praiſe, that he that runs may read it. Thus you ſee, that thoſe things which Religion requires our belief of, as that God is, is the cheifeſt good, and hath made all things for ſome end, and man eſpecially for his ſervice, are all argeeable to reaſon.

Agenda. §. 3. Then for the *Agenda*, the practick part of Religion, or thoſe things, which Religion requires you to *do*, it is all ſtill but reaſonable ſervice. To convince you of this, conſider it, as it is ſet down in ſundry places of Scripture, which contain the whole of Religion, or whole duty of man in this particular. Begin with *Solo-*

Eccleſ. 12. 13. *mon*; *Let us hear the concluſion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.* And is not all this your reaſonable ſervice or duty? that you ſhould fear and reverence, and have an awful dread upon your ſpirits of that God, that hath made all things and governs all things, that pondereth the goings of man, and ſeeth all the thoughts and imaginations of his heart? That God at whoſe preſence the mountains fall down, the Rocks rend, and the Earth trembles and quakes; that God who (as the wiſe man ſpeaks in the following words) will bring every work into judgment, and be-

beſtow eternal rewards or inflict eternal puniſhments upon men, according to their works done here in the fleſh, is it not reaſonable you *ſhould fear him, and keep his Commandments, whoſe Commandments are not grievous, but holy, juſt and good?* Who hath an abſolute ſoveraignty over you and all the world, to command what he pleaſeth, and is pleaſed to command nothing, but what the diſcharge or doing of, ſhall make for your good, as well as his own glory? Who in his wiſdom and mercy hath ſo interwoven his honour with our ſalvation, that we cannot ſeek the promotion of the one, but we neceſſarily promote the other; to obſerve and do theſe commands to the utmoſt of our power, is it any whit more than reaſonable? Hear alſo what the Prophet *Micah* ſaith in this caſe: *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* Here again is the whole practice of piety; and ſurely nothing but reaſon in it. That men ſhould deal juſtly one with another, be kind, loving and mercifull. That they ſhould walk humbly in the ſight of God, between whom and us there is an infinite diſproportion: for God is in Heaven, we on Earth;

Mich. 6. 8.

Earth; God perfectly holy, and we both originally and actually impure and unclean: and is not humility in us towards this God a reasonable duty? Again; *The grace of God that bringeth salvation* (saith St. *Paul*) *teacheth us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly.* Here is the sum of all Religion; and is it not highly rational, that you should forsake those ways of unrighteousness, and deny those wordly lusts, which deprave your natures, darken your understandings, and besot your reason; as Whoredom, Drunkenness, Covetousness, Intemperance, and the like, which make men very beasts, or in some sence worse than beasts? Yea which destemper and disease the body, marre your health, shorten your lives, and ruin and destroy your immortal Souls? And on the contrary, that you should be sober, righteous and godly, which tends to the refining and heightning of your natures, the health and happiness of your bodies, and the eternal welfare of your souls in both worlds; can any thing be offered or prescribed to man, more reasonable than this? To sum up all in the words of our blessed Lord; *Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, that do ye unto them;*

Tit. 2. 11. 12.

Math. 7. 12.

for

for this is the Law and the Prophets. Here our Saviour tells you is all (as to practice) that God and Religion requires of you; and is not this highly reasonable? Would you not that others should dishonour, discredit, wrong, defraud you, or covet any thing that is yours; is it not reasonable you do not these things to them? Or would you have others kind, merciful, just and charitable to you; is it not reasonable you should be so to them? One of the Heathen Emperors was so taken with this saying of our Saviour, that he caused it to be written in sundry places of his Palace, and severely punished him that did not observe it: And so admired Christ for it, that he would have built a Temple to him; but that he feared it would have proved the ruine of those Temples dedicated to their Gods. And certainly he must put off the use of reason, and disown the name of man, that will not acknowledg this is reasonable, to do in all things as he would be done unto. And this is the sum of all Religion. This (saith Christ) is the Law and the Prophets. Hitherto then all that God and Religion requires of you, is but reasonable service.

§. 4. As to the *speranda* or *munera*, the reward of Religion, or which Religion pro- *Speranda sive munera religionis.*

promiſeth and procureth to her ſincere followers, as a peaceable conſcience, a quiet mind, communion with God, the ſenſe of his favour and love, pardon of ſin, and the adoption of ſons here, and eternal bliſs hereafter: a Crown, a Kingdom, Coheirſhip with the Son of God, yea ſuch *rewards as eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive.* You muſt needs grant 'tis highly reaſonable, a man ſhould prefer theſe before fading pleaſures and ſenſual delights; and that he ſhould ſeek the attainment and enjoyment of them by all means, ſeeing the preſent and future welfare of the whole man, ſoul and body, depends upon it. And ſeeing there is no way or means by which you can ſecure theſe to your ſelves, but by being truly holy and Religious, by following Chriſt in that pattern of obedience and holineſs he hath ſet before us, the doing of this muſt needs be our moſt reaſonable ſervice.

§. 5. Henceforward then (whatever Satan may ſuggeſt, young men!) conclude all Atheiſm and Irreligion to be irrational, which teacheth men to dream and fancy that there is no God, but that all things came by chance, and by chance continue; that there is no future ſtate, no future reward to be expected or future puniſhment to be fear-

feared; that man lives only for himſelf, and when he dyes, is like the beaſts that periſh; that the thing called Religion is only an invention to keep the lower ſpirit of the world in awe and order. Certainly an Atheiſt is but a beaſt in the proportion and dreſs of a man; or a man bereft of that quality which diſtinguiſheth him from a beaſt, Reaſon. For it is impoſſible for a man to manifeſt more want of reaſon, than in denying God and wandering from him, who is the fountain of his being, and Well-ſpring of all his bleſſedneſs. And nothing doth more evidence a mans reaſon, than to acknowledg a Supream Truth to be believed, a chief good to be embraced, a great and eternal God to be adored and worſhiped. And therefore though Philoſophers difference man from bruits by his cheif natural quality, *viz.* Reaſon; yet ſome Divines like rather to do it by his ſupernatural excellency *viz.* Religion. Partly becauſe Religion is the higheſt and trueſt reaſon, and therefore cauſeth the greateſt eſſential diſtinction or difference: And partly becauſe Religion is the end and excellency of the rational creature, of which Bruits are wholly incapable: Atheiſm therefore is moſt unreaſonable. And how great will your condemnation be, who profeſs to be-

lieve this, and yet refuſe to ſerve God and to give him that Sacrifice that is due to him, and which you confeſs is but your reaſonable ſervice? what, will you act againſt your reaſon and conſcience? will not the ſenſe of the worth of your immortal ſouls, nor the ſerious conſideration of the weight of an unchangeable eſtate in another world, nor the convictions of Gods Spirit and your own conſciences, that Religion is reaſonable, prevail with you to be religious in good earneſt, and to ſerve God with all the powers and faculties of your ſouls and bodies? Are you convinced that the true and living God hath made you for an higher end, than to gratifie your ſenſual appetite, follow your particular callings, and mind lying vanities? why then do you not mind things of an higher nature and import, the ſervice of God and ſalvation of your own ſouls? why do *you yet lay out your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which will never ſatisfie*; againſt the dictates of Reaſon and Convictions of your own Conſciences? Are you convinced, that God in all reſpects is the beſt Maſter, and that Religion will bring you the greateſt profit and ſureſt gain in the end; *having the promiſe both of the life that now is, and*

and of that which is to come? Why then will you not ſerve God and become Religious? Do you not know that ſins againſt conſcience will bring upon you the greateſt Vengeance? Are you not alſo convinced of this, that men when they come to dye wiſh they had minded Religion more, and ſerved God better? And do you not think that when death ſeizeth you, you ſhall be of the ſame mind, and ſay, O that I had more regarded holineſs and the practice of Religion, and dedicated and devoted my ſelf to God by an holy life, who made me, heaped many mercies upon me, and promiſed infinite and eternal rewards to me? And will not the thoughts and remembrances of your neglect of Religion and ſervice of God now at death, be more bitter than the practice of it could have been burthenſome in your life? Without doubt it will and muſt. Therefore if you would not be ſelf-condemned at death and judgment, reſolve to become ſpeedily and ſeriouſly Religious; to redeem your time, to ſerve the true and Living God with the deepeſt humility, the greateſt fear, the hotteſt love, and higheſt faith; and the remainder of your days *to have your fruits unto holineſs, that the end may be everlaſting life.*

CHAP. VIII.

Wherein is briefly ſet forth the excellency of the wayes of Religion above the wayes of Sin.

§. 1. AS a farther perſwaſive to the practice of Religion and an holy life, conſider that the way of holineſs, the way to Heaven, take it at the very worſt, with all the miſeries and afflictions that may attend it, is better than the way of ſin, the way to Hell, take it at the very beſt, with all the ſenſual delights and pleaſures that are to be found in it. The pooreſt, bittereſt, moſt deſpiſed way to reſt and felicity, is infinitely more chooſable, than the richeſt, ſweeteſt, fulleſt and faireſt way to torment and miſery. It is better to go to Chriſt through a Dungeon in chains of iron, than to Satan through a Paradiſe in chains of Gold. Look upon theſe two with a proper, real, and ſound eſtimation, and there is no compariſon between the *worſt* of Piety and the *beſt* of Iniquity. One is called the way of darkneſs, the other the way of light, the one the way of truth, the other the way

way of error: the way of holineſs is called the way of life; the way of ſin, the way of death. The one ends in the higheſt communion with God, the other in the fulleſt ſeparation from God. The former leads to the greateſt ſupernatural bleſſedneſs, the other to the loweſt and moſt inconceivable deſtruction. Now that I may fully convince your judgments of the truth of this point, I ſhall hint ſome ſcripture arguments to confirm it; and ſuch as carry with them the greateſt force of reaſon to perſwade the minds of men to believe it. They are ſuch as theſe,

§. 2. Though there be more miſerable evils in the way of the Godly, yet there are more ſinfull evils in the way of the wicked: Divines diſtinguiſh of evils. Sinfull and ſorrowfull evills. Sorrowfull or penall evils, which are theſe, outward loſſes, abridgment, want, diſquietneſs, pain, ſickneſs, reproach, and ſuch like. There are indeed many of theſe evils in the way of the righteous. And there are ſinfull evils, as wickedneſs of heart, profaneneſs of life, in the way of the ungodly. Now conſider all the ſorrowful, miſerable evils of this life, and they are but *minima in genere malorum*, the leaſt kind of evils. As the good things of this life are the leaſt

leaſt kind of good things; therefore ſo often heaped upon the wicked. And (as I ſaid) theſe outward evils, which are oppoſite to theſe outward good things, are but the leaſt kind of evils. As Poverty is oppoſite to Riches, impriſonment to liberty, ſickneſs to health, and want to fulneſs: But what is a ſinful evil oppoſite to? 'Tis oppoſite to the beſt, to the greateſt good, that is God. Oppoſite to the Will of God, to the nature, glory, preſence and fruition of God. Some good may come by ſorrowfull evils: a man may climb to Heaven by the croſs, as the good Thief did. But no good can come to a man by ſinfull evils; for they are all killing and damning. Now what is a light affliction for a moment, to a deſtruction endleſs and intolerable?

§. 3. There be ſome croſſes in the way of Holineſs and Religion; but there be many curſes in the way of ſin. Our Saviour hath ſaid indeed, *If any man will come after me, let him take up his croſs and follow me.* Such muſt expect trouble. But the advantage is, as the Chriſtian is not exempted from the Croſs, ſo neither is the Croſs divided from the Comfort. *But as* Cor. 2, 1. 5. *their ſufferings abound, ſo their conſolation abounds much more by Chriſt.* And a ſweet-

ned

ned Croſs, is better than an imbittered Crown. 'Tis better that the meat lye in the preſerving Brine, than rot in the ſweeteſt honey. But on the contrary, in the way of ſin there are (it may be not ſo many Croſſes, but) more Curſes. As the way of the wicked is filled up with ſins, ſo 'tis filled up all along with Curſes. *The Curſe of the Lord is in the Houſe of the wicked, but he bleſſeth the habitation of the juſt.* Pro. 3. 33. And in the 28th of *Deuteronomy*, ſee how thick Curſes are ſown in the way of the wicked. *Curſed ſhall he be in the Field; Curſed ſhall he be in the City; Curſed in his basket, in his ſtore*, &c. Deut. 28. *ad finem cap.* And is not this a miſerable way, that a man cannot ſet a ſtep in it, but a Curſe attends him? Is not a Priſon where the light of Gods countenance ſhines, better than a Palace where the cloud of Gods wrath ſets? Is it not better to meet with unpleaſant Phyſick, than to drink a delightfull Cup of Poyſon? Is not a Croſs in the way and happineſs in the end, better than pleaſure in the way and Curſedneſs in the end? Then the way of Religion is better than the way of ſin.

§. 4. Though in the way of ſin you may enjoy more of the Creature, yet in the ways of holineſs you ſhall enjoy more of God. Wicked men in Scripture are called

led children of the night, good men children of the day. Now though in the night there be more ſtars, yet in the day there is more Sun, and the Sunlight is better than ſtarlight. The ungodly poſſeſs more of this world, therefore called the men of the world: whoſe bellies God is ſaid to fill with this world, as he did *Dives* his; but he had better been without it. And Pſa. 73. *David* ſpeaking of the wicked ſaith, *they* Job. 21. *have more than heart can wiſh.* And *Job* ſets forth the abundance that befals them: but all this is but the world, but the Creature. And as the Princes kiſs was more valuable than his cup of Gold; ſo the good we enjoy from God is more than all we can enjoy from the Creature. In the way to deſtruction you may have more riches; but in the way to Heaven you ſhall have more graces, which are more pretious than Gold, yea than fine Gold that periſheth. In the way of ſin you may have the acclamation of men; but in the way of holineſs you ſhall be ſure to have the approbation of God. A wicked man may ſay in his way, this houſe is mine, this eſtate, theſe poſſeſſions mine; but the godly man may ſay, this Heaven is mine, this Jeſus is mine. All that the one can boaſt of, is, that theſe Creatures are mine

and

and theſe ſins are mine; but the other may ſay, God is mine, his love mine, his favour, his mercy, his promiſes, all mine for evermore. Judge now, is it not better to enjoy a ſpring than a drop, the Sun than a candle, the Subſtance than the ſhadow? Is not fulneſs better than emptineſs, the chiefeſt good, which is God, than the leaſt good, which is the Creature? Is it not better to poſſeſs glorious certainties, than ſpecious, ſeeming nothings and vanities? In a word is it not better to enjoy him, who alone is all happineſs, than all other things, which without him are but a cypher? then the way of holineſs is better than the way of ſin.

§. 5. The way of Religion hath more liberty in it than the way of ſin. I know you will think this a ſtrange aſſertion. 'Tis for this reaſon that wicked men chooſe the way of ſin, that they may have liberty. This is one main end of their walking in this way, and main cauſe of their being ſo hardly brought off from it, becauſe 'tis wide and broad, and they may have room and liberty enough. But they are deceived in their end, for there is more liberty in the waies of God, than in the waies of ſin. To make this good, know, there is a threefold liberty.

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1. An indifferent liberty, which is converſant about the lawful uſe of the Creature: The way of Religion barres not this liberty at all, nor diminiſheth it, but adds to it rather; adds ſome drams of ſweetneſs to reliſh the Creature. A Religious perſon may buy, ſell, marry, eat and drink, and glad his heart in the lawful uſe of Creature-comforts; though not diſhonour God and defile his own ſoul by the abuſe of them, as the wicked do; who by their ſin poyſon all their lawful things. Drunkenneſs and Exceſs turns his meat and drink into poyſon, pride makes his garments infectious; all his bleſſings become a curſe, and his very liberty in theſe things a perfect ſlavery, by his vile luſts. So that a godly man enjoyeth more liberty about the uſe of lawful things, than any wicked man upon Earth whatſoever.

2. There is a carnal liberty, which is nothing elſe but the licentiouſneſs of a mans luſts, the liberty of a corrupt, a baſe heart; a liberty for men to do evil, to act as they liſt, and to live without all check or controll. *Our tongues are our own, who ſhall be Lord over us?* I confeſs Religion allows no ſuch liberty, which is falſly ſo called; and the way of Religion is not at all the worſe for denying men this liber-

liberty; but the better. As it is no defect, but a perfection in God, that he cannot lye, or deny himſelf, ſo it is the excellency of Religion that it allows not of a licentious liberty; which in truth is a bondage, and wholly inconſiſtent with true liberty. The Holy Ghoſt calls the ſervice of ſin, a bondage. And will you call this liberty, which God himſelf calls a bondage, and the worſt of bondage, ſpiritual bondage, to corruption, ſin and Satan? who worketh in wicked men effectually, ruleth over their hearts, and carries them captive at his will? is this liberty, to be held with the chain of Hell? Is that man at liberty, who is at the command of every vile luſt; if his luſts bid him ſwear, he ſwears, lye, ſteal, commit adultery, do this or that ſinful action, and he doth it? Is that man at liberty, who is now captivated to one ſin, then to another? One while a ſlave to prodigality, then to covetouſneſs; now a ſlave to preſumption, then to deſpair; now to exceſſive mirth and revelling, then to exceeding fears and horrors; while his luſts give his ſoul no reſt night or day, but tire him out from time to time with importunity; and all he doth, he doth with a ſlaviſh ſpirit? Sometimes anxious and careful how to com-

2 Pet. 2. 19.

commit sin; and then fearing lest those sins should be discovered? First his evil heart sollicits him to sin, and he cannot withstand it; and afterwards his conscience (like *Judas* his) torments him for sin, that he cannot endure it. And look how many lusts you have unmortified, so many Lords, and worse than *Egyptian* taskmasters, you have over you. This is all the liberty you have in the way of sin, wherein there lies Serjeants, Jaylors, Fears, Attachments, and thy own Conscience both Witness, Judge, Prison and Hell. But in the way of Religion and holiness, there is a spiritual liberty, the highest attainable in this world; this is liberty from the dominion of sin, from the curse of the Law, and from all condemnation. It is such a liberty as takes away the spirit of bondage, and puts in the spirit of adoption, the spirit of love, making us willing to serve God, whose service is perfect freedom. Here is a liberty to plead for mercy at the throne of grace, and doth never cease till it be consummated in glory. Therefore if you are for true liberty, choose the way of Religion: for the contrary is so far from liberty, that it is the greatest slavery and bondage on this side Hell.

Joh. 8. 36.
Rom. 6. 14.
Gal. 3. 13.
Rom. 8. 15.
Rom. 8. 1.

§. 6. In the way of Religion and holiness

neſs, as you ſhall have Liberty, ſo all things elſe that are needful to make the way eaſie and delightful to you: A ſufficient Guide, God: *Thou ſhalt guide me by thy counſel, and afterward receive me to glory.* Pſal. 73. 24. A better Guide you cannot deſire, and better counſel you cannot have; 'tis ſufficient to direct you in all dangers, fears, temptations and difficulties. To every one that walks in this way, God gives the ſame aſſurance, that he did to *Jacob*: *I will be with thee, and keep thee in all places whither thou goeſt, and I will not leave thee.* Gen. 28. 15. When thou art weary, I will give thee reſt: when thou falleſt, I will raiſe thee up: when thou wandereſt, I will reduce thee: when thou art fainting, I will ſtrengthen thee: when thou dyeſt, I will ſave thee; *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee.* Heb. 13. 5. And as the omnipotent and omniſcient God will be your Guide in this way, ſo he will afford you all needful helps and aſſiſtances, to help you forward, both inward and outward: Inward, his Spirit and Grace, preventing, corroborating, renewing, preſerving grace, which ſhall daily increaſe in your ſouls: All outward aids and aſſiſtances; as the Word, which is called a Staff to keep thee from falling, and a Light to keep thee from ſtraying; the Sacraments,

which are as dew upon thy graces to increaſe them, and ſeals to thy Faith to confirm it to the end: The help of all Gods faithful ſervants, living and dead. The dead recorded in Scripture, help thee by their Examples; the living by their Prayers. And above all thou haſt Chriſt in Heaven, making continual interceſſion for thee. This very conſideration proclaims the way of Religion more excellent and more eligible, than the way of ſin.

§. 7. Add to this, that the way of Religion though ſomewhat ſtrict and difficult, is the only way to glorifie God and enrich your ſelves. The glory of God is the principal end of your Creation and Redemption. All that you have and are, your lives, eſtates, ſouls, bodies, parts, are all from God, and given for God, and ought to be improved to his glory. You neither made your ſelves, nor were made for your ſelves; neither is any thing given to you to ſerve your luſts. Honours are not given to make men proud, nor Authority to make men inſolent, nor Riches to make men idle, nor parts to make men ſubtil in evil; but all to make us good, and to render us more apt to glorifie our Maker. And as this way brings glory to God, ſo gain to your ſelves. As a man who walks on

on in a way of ſin, though he could gain the world muſt be a loſer in the end, becauſe he loſeth his own ſoul: So if a Chriſtian going on in the way of righteouſneſs and true holineſs, ſhould loſe all he hath in this world, if he ſhould never ſee a quiet day upon Earth, never feel a drop of joy in his heart, never eat a morſel of bread but in a priſon, nor ever do any ſervice for God but at a Stake; yet in the end, continuing faithful, he is a great gainer for all this, becauſe he ſaves his ſoul and gains Heaven: And *becauſe theſe light afflictions, for a moment, ſhall end in a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* And our bleſſed Saviour ſaith, *He that forſakes Father, or Mother, or houſes or lands for my ſake, ſhall receive an hundred fold in the life that now is, and in the world to come everlaſting life.* Therefore if you have any deſire both to glorifie God here, and ſecure to your ſelves eternal gain hereafter, walk in the way of Holineſs, Piety and Religion. And which is further and greatly conſiderable, let me laſt of all mind you of this; that neither the way of Religion, nor the ſtrictneſs of it will laſt long: Your works, duties, ſufferings, afflictions and croſſes ſhall not be for ever. Perhaps you may be Religious, ſtrict

and holy in this Life a few years, or months, or days; and then all thy hard duties, all thy croſſes and afflictions, all thy combates and conflicts with ſin, Sathan and the world; and all thy doubts, fears, deſpondencies and griefs are at an end for ever, and thy felicity begins that ſhall never end.

The Concluſion.

§. 1. HAving offered ſome diſſwaſives from Sin, and perſwaſives to Holineſs; all that yet remains is, my earneſt and hearty entreaty, that you would ſit down and conſider what you have read. For this little Eſſay (with the other greater helps which God affords you) ſhall aſſuredly be a witneſs for or againſt you in the day of Judgment. Books are like Phyſick, if they do n't do good, they do hurt. And if any thing make it work kindly, it muſt be Conſideration: Pondering and weighing well in your minds, what you have read on both ſides; for Piety, and againſt Iniquity. Soul matters, ſpiritual and Heavenly things are of eternal moment;

ment; therefore call for the greateſt deliberation and ſerioufneſs. But moſt men are raſh and inconſiderate in theſe mighty affairs; therefore ſo often in Scripture ſtiled Fools; and in truth there is none ſo fooliſh as the ſinner. *They conſider not what they do.* They are carried to their courſes with vain, not with ſerious thoughts; upon the fury of raſh reſolution, not upon the ſtableneſs of advice and counſel. Whereas would they but take counſel of themſelves by a deliberate conſideration, would they (as we ſay proverbially) but *look* before they *leap*, they might ſhun many impieties, which they run headlong into. For conſideration takes an intimate view of matters, and rightly ponders of the nature and full ſhape of things: it turns things over and over, inſide out; conſiders this and thinketh of that, it ſeeth the beſt and worſt; it compareth nature with nature, kind with kind, cauſe with cauſe, occurrence with occurrence, iſſue with iſſue, reaſon with reaſon, and end with end: It asks where and how a thing begins, and when and how it ends. So that would you take more conſideration, which is in your power to do, you would not be ſo fooliſh and mad in your choice for your ſelves, as the moſt are. Had the

Prodigal ſon, but well conſidered before-hand what would have been the iſſue and end of leaving his Fathers houſe, for the company of Harlots, he would never have been ſo haſty to be gone. Had *Gehazi* thought with himſelf, how dear he muſt pay for his two Talents and ſuits of apparel, he would never have run ſo faſt to overtake *Naaman*, as he did. But generally men will not conſider of the matters of ſalvation and damnation. Delight, pleaſure or profit make the ſinner quick and venturous, and will give no time willingly for conſideration, which would be a great wound to ſin, and often cruſh that Cockatrice in the Egg, in the firſt motions of it. But men little conſider, that for every ſinful profit or pleaſure the precious ſoul is laid to pawn, to anſwer for it. The Drunkard will not conſider he pawns his ſoul for his inebriating cups, the Unclean perſon for his laſcivious act, the miſerable Worldling for his ill-gotten gain; yea and the common Swearer for his raſh Oaths: But feed greedily on the ſweet morſels, and ſuck liberally of the preſent pleaſures of ſin, not conſidering what the Feaſt will coſt, when the reckoning's paid. Therefore I ſay, let me prevail with you to ſit down and conſider a while: And if your con-

2 King. 5. 27.

conſcience tells you, you are yet the ſervants of Satan, walking in known wayes of ſin, ask your ſelves whether you have ſufficient reaſons for this your choyce, ſuch as will afford you comfort, when death comes? What if you ſhould once a day commune (as *David* ſpeaks) with your own hearts after this manner?

§. 2. Were I this day to dye, what would my choyce be then, would it be the ſame that now it is, or hitherto hath been? ſhould I then chooſe *the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*, for a few dayes, and refuſe *the pleaſures at Gods right hand for evermore?* Suppoſe I were now tumbling and trembling upon my dying bed, under a cold ſweat, my eyes ſet, my heart fainting, and my breath departing (as it muſt and will be with me a few days hence) ſhould I then chooſe Hell before Heaven? ſhould I ſay then, God damn me, Lord reject my ſoul for evermore; or this rather, Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit, Lord take me to thy ſelf in glory? would I then ſay, Lord never let me ſhare in thy mercy, or Lord have mercy upon me; Lord let me be a *companion for the Devil and his Angels, in regions of darkneſs and devouring burnings to all eternity*; or, *Lord let me enter into the new Jeruſalem, the City of the liv-*

ing God, the Church of the firſt-born, to the communion of Saints, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect? Which of theſe ſtates would you then chooſe?

§. 3. Why (ſinner) the former of theſe is that which you chooſe now, who chooſe the ways of ſin, and ſervice of Satan. You chooſe wrath and damnation, the company of Devils, excluſion from Heaven the place of bliſs, and the fulleſt, the furtheſt ſeparation and diſtance from God, the chief good, and center of all happineſs. And is this the choyce you will make in the end, when you come to dye? No, God forbid: then reflect and conſider a little, and be not raſh but ſerious, I beſeech you, in theſe great things. If Heaven be better than Hell, life ſweeter than death, if glory be more deſirable upon a dying bed than miſery, and mercy than wrath; why ſhould not the way to mercy and glory, be better than the way to deſtruction; the way to life more pleaſant to you, than the way to death? Why ſhould you not chooſe the way of Religion and holineſs now, and enter upon it preſently, this day before the next, ſince you are convinced you muſt come into this way before you dye, or you can never be ſaved? And ſince you purpoſe

poſe it hereafter, and talk of repentance and holineſs hereafter, why have you any ſuch thoughts or purpoſes at all, but that you are convinced 'tis the way to Heaven, and that you ſhall chooſe the end of this way, when death comes? And why ſhould you not refuſe, ſhun, hate and avoid the way of ſin now, when you are convinced in your conſciences, you ſhall be loath to receive the fruit and end of that way, when you come to leave the world? Certainly wicked men have no reaſon on their ſide. The Apoſtle ſaith, *Great is the myſtery of godlineſs*; truly I may invert his words, and ſay, Great is the myſtery of wickedneſs. For I can ſee no reaſon, nor do I think any man upon ſerious thoughts can render any good or ſolid reaſon, why he ſhould chooſe the way of the wicked, rather than the way of the upright, to follow the Devil rather than Chriſt, and to walk in the paths of ſin, rather than the way of Religion. Only men will do it, ſo they are ſinful and wicked, and will be for ever miſerable and wretched, becauſe they *will*, fulfilling that of the Prophet; *their deſtruction is of themſelves*, 'tis wilfull deſtruction, 'tis choſen damnation.

§. 4. Therefore, young men (for whoſe ſake

ſake principally I undertook this little work) take for a cloſe that of the Prophet;
Iſa. 3. 10, 11 *Say unto the righteous it ſhall be well with him, for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings; Woe unto the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him.* And ſit down and conſider it, till you have brought your hearts to a firm belief of the truth of it. There are but two wayes wherein all the men in the world are travelling, the way of Sin and the way of Righteouſneſs: But two Leaders whom they all follow, Chriſt or the Devil: But two places whither they all tend, Heaven or Hell. And know, this direction and exhortation is from the Lord, though handed to you by his unworthy ſervant: and if you deny me, you therein deny him; and if ſo, the time is coming and will come, when he will deny you. And dare any of you deny the Lord? and ſay
Jer. 44. 16, 17. as thoſe wicked ones to the Prophet *Jeremiah, As for the word which thou haſt ſpoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken to it:* We will not forſake our ſins, we will not follow Chriſt, nor be tyed and bound to ſuch circumſpection and holineſs, as his followers are, and as his Word re-
Jer. 18. 12. quires: *But we will do whatſoever proceedeth*

ceedeth out of our own mouth, do our own devices, and walk every one after the imagination of his own evil heart? And are you content and willing God ſhould take you at your words, and for ever give you over to your own hearts luſts, to walk in your own wayes and after your own counſels? Are you willing from henceforth to give up all your hopes in Chriſt, your hope of Heaven, your hope of Life, Salvation and eternal glory, and to be damned for ever in another world? why this is the choyce you are put to, either to live an holy life, or to be for ever miſerable after death; either to ſubmit to the Yoak of Chriſt, or never to receive benefit by the Croſs of Chriſt; to kiſs the Scepter of his Mercy, or fall by the ſword of his Juſtice; either to follow him in his Kingdom of Grace, or to be eternally excluded his Kingdom of Glory. There is no other way, but theſe two: One of theſe you muſt chooſe. The ſumme of all is, you muſt repent or periſh; and follow after Holineſs, or never ſee the Lord. Religion is the only way God hath made to Heaven, and if you never walk in the way, you can never come thither. And aſſure your ſelves, I can have no other end or intereſt to aim at, in taking

taking any pains to perſwade you to be good, and to be ſincere followers of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but this, His glory and your ſalvation; which to aim *at* is doubtleſs your Intereſt, as much as mine; and if all that I have written cannot convince you 'tis ſo, 'tis but a few days more, and Death and Judgment ſhall.

Gloria Trinuni Deo

ſine Fine.

THE

THE

Young Man's Monitor:

OR, A

POETICAL PARAPHRASE

Upon the XIIth Chapter of

ECCLESIASTES.

The PREFACE.

Eccles. XII. i.

Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

YOung man, remember in thy youthfull age
Thy Great *Creator*, and betimes ingage
Thy Soul and body both, with all thy might
To do him Service, e're the sable night
Of frightfull death approach; or evil day
Of old decrepid age, wherein you'l say,

There

There is no pleaſure, nor a will to work:
Youth's ſloth ſtill in thy aged bones doth lurk.
Wherefore before thy halting age doth come,
Before thy Spirits ſuffer martyrdome,
Thy joynts are feeble, and thy heart is faint,
And killing evils do thy body taint;
Before thy wit, thy health and ſtrength decayes,
Give God the prime and flower of thy dayes.

VERSE II.

While the Sun, or the Light, or the Moon, or the Stars be not darkned, or the clouds return after the rain.

BEfore the Sun and Moon withdraw their light,
And Stars be dark'ned by an aged night;
Thine eye-lids drop down briniſh tears amain,
Like dripping Clouds returning after rain;

PARAPHRASE.

ERe wrink'led age, and Paleneſs doth diſgrace
The Serene luſtre of thy youthfull face;
Thy comely cheeks do loſe their Roſy hew,
And heat and vigour bid thy lips adieu;
Before thine eyes grow dark and dim, and doe
Like Stars by day, at laſt extinguiſh too.
Or underſtand it thus, ----before the *Sun*
Quite through thy youthfull Zodiack hath run:
Or if not then, yet while the *Light* doth laſt,
While yet thy ſtronger Manhood is not paſt.
Or if not then, before the *Moon* is gone,
Thy Manhood and thine Elder years are done;
At leaſt, at laſt while Mid-night *Stars* do ſhine,
Before thy dotage miſeries combine,

Like

Like Clouds, and threaten ſorrows in a ſhow'r,
Even ſuch as may diſſolve thee every hour.

Remember thy Creatour.

VERSE III.

In the day when the Keepers of the houſe ſhall tremble, and the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves, and the grinders ceaſe becauſe they are few, and thoſe that look out of the windows be darkened.

BEfore the day approach, when thoſe that keep
Thy clayie cottage tumble; thoſe that peep
Forth of the windows, do in haſt retreat:
Thy ſtrong men bow, and grinders ceaſe to eat.

PARAPHRSE.

THe wiſe-man means, before thy hands and arms
That kept thy body(‖call'd an houſe)from harms ‖ 2 *Cor.* 5. 1.
Shall ceaſe their work, and (through thine abuſe)
Shall by an Aged palſy loſe their uſe;
Thoſe wary watchmen, that did always ſtand
And keep a Centinel at thy command,
Undaunted were, and ready to endure
The fierceſt Onſets, thereby to ſecure
Their head and body; now alas they faint,
Baſe cowardiſe doth now their courage taint.
Thoſe painfull Labourers, whoſe daily task
Was to adminiſter what thou did'ſt ask,
Did firſt provide, and after feed thee too,
(As careful Nurſes for their nurſlings doe)
Now ſtand in need of others to diſpence
Convenient diet, for their Suſtinence:

Their

Their former work they cannot now ingage,
But trembling ſtand through feebleneſs and age.
Thy Legs and Thighs, thoſe men of ſtrength to run,
Now bow themſelves, and cry their Race is done.
Time was, they nimbly poſted thee about,
That thou might'ſt find thine own inventions out;
When they did ſwiftly trace the ways of ſin,
And would to th' houſe of God as ſwift have been,
If thou had'ſt put them to 't, but now, alas!
Weakneſs is where their Youthfull vigour was.
Their ſtrength is gone, and they are tyred ſo
With running heretofore, they ſcarce can go.
Thy uſefull Grinders that were once compleat,
Now fail and cannot maſticate their meat.
Thine *Eyes*, thoſe window-peepers, that did ſhow
Like brighter Stars within their Orbs below,
Like waſted Tapers loſe their light, and blink,
And back into their hollow Sockets ſink.
The Wiſemans counſell is therefore, that you
Before theſe evils come, Remember now
Thy Great Creator:

VERSE IV.

And the doors ſhall be ſhut in the ſtreet, when the Sound of the grinding is low, and he ſhall riſe up at the voyce of the bird, and all the daughters of muſick ſhall be brought low.

---------- Er'e the doors be ſhut,
And to the Grinding Sound an end be put;
Before the Bird ſhall raiſe thee by her voyce,
And all the Daughters ceaſe their pleaſant noiſe.

PARA-

PARAPHRASE.

SOme lit'rally by *Doors* doe underſtand
Thoſe of the houſe wherein he liveth, and
By which he ran (when young) into the ſtreet
His Friends and his Aſſociates to meet:
And by which *Doors*, his Friends reſorted thither
To laugh and quaffe, and paſs the time together.
But now thoſe doors are ſhut, and privacy
Old age likes better than their company.
Or by theſe Doors, we underſtand the Ear
Which now is ſhut, is deaf, and cannot hear:
Theſe are the *Doors*, by which you do receive
The ſweet inſtructions that your Teachers give;
All counſel good and evil, is convey'd
By theſe unto the Soul, by which ſhe's ſway'd
To this or that ------- O open then the door
To Wiſdom's ſaving counſel now, before
Old age hath clos'd it, and thou then begin
To call advice, when none can enter in.
Perhaps the Wiſeman doth by *Doors*, intend
The Mouth and Noſe, and whatſoe're doth ſend
Aid to the Intrails; and by *Streets* he may
The Pipes and Veins, and Arteries diſplay,
Which in old age grow faint, and filthy too,
And ceaſe their former Offices to doe.
The Valves are clos'd, the tyred blood now ſtops
Within it's veins, and circulates by drops:
The *Doors* are off the hinges, and 'tis hard
To open them, that ruſting age hath barr'd.
Before this be thy caſe, ſtirr up thy ſtrength
And ſet to work for Heav'n, that at length,
When from this houſe of Clay thy Soul muſt put,
Thou maiſt not find the Door of Heav'n ſhut.

Before thy mouth, which now doth grind and crump
It's food with noiſe, it's food doth ſoftly mump.
Before ſuch noiſe, as you ne're wont to hear,
At midnight wake and Startle you with fear:
The *Birds* ſweet voyce, which you were wont to love
Is harſh, and now to paſſion doth you move.
Not only Thunder, or the noiſe of Drums,
Beating and ratling in your ſleeping rooms,
Diſturb your reſt; ------ but at the ſmalleſt din
You are awak'ned and muſt riſe agin.
A Cock may'nt crow, or little Chicken peep;
Alas, Old age muſt ask them leave to ſleep;
Before the *Daughters Muſick* ſhall be turn'd
Jer. 6.29. To *Low* and harſher *Notes*; the bellowes burn'd
That fed the Organs; or before thy *Lungs*,
Thoſe bags of breath do fail thee, and thy *tongue*,
Time-keeper to the reſt, ſhall falter quite;
Thy pipes are hoarſe, and do ſo creak, 't would fright
Thy ſelf to hear them now, which heretofore
Melodiouſly could ſing, and chaunt and roar,
Keep time and tune too, and riſe and fall,
Obſerve their ſtops, and quaver it withall:
Could play ſo ſweetly, that they'd often move
And raviſh ſuch as do wind-muſick love.
But now theſe *Daughters* bid their mirth good night,
Their *Muſick*'s ſuch, as cannot now delight:
They now afford (although they ſtrain for't too)
No better muſick than Groat Fiddles do:
Or if you pleaſe (which yet is more forlorn)
No better ſound than doth a Gelders horn:
Therefore before thy Pleaſant dayes are gone,
Young man! thy Great Creator think upon.

Remem-

Remember thy Creator, &c.

VERSE V.

Alſo when they ſhall be afraid of that which is high, and fears ſhall be in the way, and the Almond-tree ſhall flouriſh, and the Graſhopper ſhall be a burden, and deſire ſhall fail; becauſe man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the ſtreets.

BEfore thou be afraid of what is high,
And cauſeleſs fears now in thy way do lye;
Before the blooming of the Almond tree,
And the Graſhopper ſhall a burden be,
Before deſire fail; becauſe man muſt
To his long home, that is, return to duſt;
The Mourners fill the ſtreets with hideous cryes,
And make them eccho their ſad Elegyes.

PARAPHRASE.

BEfore thy Health and Strength are ſo far ſpent,
That thou ſhalt tremble at the leaſt *aſcent*.
Time was, you could have over mountains run,
Climb pyramids, as if you'ld fetch the Sun
From his Celeſtial Orb; or meant to trace
Some other Planet in his nimble race:
But now 'tis otherwiſe; you ſtoop and bow,
Creep on all four, looking down below;
And if but one of all the four do ſtumble,
You tot'ring ſtand, and in a moment tumble.
And when thy craſie body's down, it lyes
Looking for help, but hath not ſtrength to riſe.

Hence 'tis, the ſmalleſt ſtone, or ſtraw, or Hill
That's in thy way, *thy way with fears* doth fill.
The *Almond Tree doth flouriſh*, gray hairs ſit
Thick on thy head, as bloſſoms do on it.
Thoſe Church-yard flowers make thy head as white,
As Mother Earth is in a ſnowy night.
The *Graſhopper*, the lighteſt burthen tires
Thy old and craſie bones: ---- All thy *Deſires*
Of pomp and pleaſure fail; the *Mourners* meet
And penſive walk together in the Street.
Becauſe thine age doth tell them, that the *Grave*
Hath got one foot already, and muſt have
The other ſhortly; ----one ſtep more and then
No tears or groans can call thee back ag'en.

Remember thy Creator, &c.

VERSE VI.

Or ever the Silver Cord be looſed; or the Golden bowl be broken, or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain, or the Wheel broken at the Ciſtern.

BEfore the Cord of Silver loſe its ſtrength,
The Bowl of Gold be broken, or at length
The Pitcher from the Fountain broken go,
Or Wheel be broken at the Ciſtern too.

PARAPHRASE.

BEfore the Pith or Marrow of thy back,
That heretofore could bend, and yet not crack,
Could burdens bear, and ne're complain or winch,
Be weak and looſed with an aged wrinch.

Before

Before the *Pericardium* of thy brain,
Being broke and ſhatter'd thou turn child again,
While yet the Veins and Veſſels do impart
The Spirits to the *Fountain* of thine *Heart*.

VERSE VII.

Then ſhall the duſt return to the Earth, and the Spirit ſhall return to God who gave it.

FOr when theſe ceaſe, thy Spirit takes it's flight
To God, and bids thy body now good night:
So thy day's ended; now thou muſt return
A lump of Aſhes to thy laſting Urn.

The Concluſion.

VERSE VIII.

Vanity of vanities (ſaith the Preacher) all is vanity.

THus thou haſt (Reader) in a ruſtick ſtrain
The wiſemans counſel. What doth yet remain,
Are ſtrong and well fram'd Arguments to prove
His counſel ſeaſonable, and to move
Thee to the practice of it. --- One doth lye
In the eighth verſe, that all is *Vanity*.
* *Eccl.* 1.1. This was the Preachers text when he * began,
And now he hath quite through his ſubject ran,
He re-aſſerts and doth with vigour cry,
Ver. 8. Sirs (I have prov'd it) *All is Vanity*.
Riches and Honours, and whate're the world
Affords, are quickly into nothing hurl'd.
Its pomps and pleaſures, ſenſual delight,
Like Vanity do vaniſh, when the night
Of death approacheth; or the *evil Time*
Of aged darkneſs clouds thy youthful prime.
Nor doth the wiſeman ſpeak at random, hee
Had paid for counſel, e're he counſel'd thee.
Ver. 9. He ſought it out and after doth diſpenſe
This ſpirit'al phyſick on experience.
By Phyſick rules his Phyſick is the beſt,
It hath affix'd a true *probatum eſt*;
And that's enough. ---For though he could have writ
No doubt whole Volumes on this Subject, yet
He gives the reaſon why he doth forbear,
Ver. 12. 'Cauſe multitude of Books a burden are:

A burden unto him to write, to you
To read a burden; ——Wherefore *Young man*, now
Take all in brief; thy Maker, that's above, *Ver.* 13, 14.
Fear, honour, his Commandments keep and love.
The Motive to inforc't, is this in *Summe*,
That thou *must dye and unto Judgment* come.

O æterna Veritas,
& vera Charitas,
& chara Æternitas,
tu es Deus meus,
ad te suspiro die & nocte! August.

Soli Deo Gloria

Sine FINE.

Call:time Againe
Now:Or:Never
Hora
Fugit
Tempus Edax rerum
mors
Cifo Pede:labitur:&tas

A Plain and profitable *Dialogue* between a *Sinner* and *Time*.

Sinner.

THough *Time* be bald, perhaps he is not dumb!
Would'ſt thou but ſtop, Old *Time*, I would have
Diſcourſe about thy Perſon, and thy Glaſs, (ſome
Thy Sythe and Foretop. —— Pray before thou paſs,
Give me but leave, in a few words, to try
Whether thy ſelf know'ſt what they ſignifie.

Time.

Ask what thou wilt, I'le anſwer as I walk;
But I ne're did, nor now can ſtand to talk.

Sinner.

Why art thou bald Old Man? what haſt thou worn
All off with age, except that lock before?

Time.

No, 'tis an Hierogliphick, that doth teach,
If time's once paſt, in vain it is to reach
An hand out after him; that you muſt meet
Him as he comes, if paſt you cannot greet.
Your Goods may be confiſcate, Money lent
To Huckſters, Houſes burnt, Eſtates quite ſpent;
You may imbrace a ſtinking Dunghil, then, *Job* 2.8.
As *Job* once did, recover all agen. *Job* 42.10.
But men or Angels cannot once repay
To you the loſs of one Month, Week or Day;

Nor

Nor can one minute paſt e're be recall'd;
And that's the meaning of my being bald.

Sinner.

But why do Eagles-wings adorn thy Glaſs?
To manifeſt how ſuddainly we paſs
From birth to death? Or do they repreſent
Our Swifter flight from hence, the ſand being ſpe[illegible]

Time.

Yes, 'tis a lively Emblem, that doth ſhow
How ſwift mans few and ſinful hours do go;
Eccl. 3.2. Not go, but run; run, that's too ſlow, they flye:
Well ſaid the Wiſeman then, a time to dye
And to be born there is, but mentions none,
For life; e're he could write it, that was gone.
When *Hezekiah*'s Sun, and Moon 'tis ſaid,
(And as ſome think) his Stars were retrograde
Full ten degrees; and *Joſhua*'s Sun did ſtand
Still in the Heavens; ſtill the nimble ſand
Of flying Time continued running; ---They
Who lived then, could not for that long day
Reckon themſelves one day, or hour younger,
Nor did it make their lives one minute longer:
But as the Glaſs continues running 'till
The laſt ſand drops; ſo paſſeth Time, and will
Not ſtep one minute back for high or low;
The Glaſs once run, ready or not, you go,
Where Time ſhall be no more; but ſwallowed be
Up in the Ocean of *Eternity*.

Thus, miſerable man, you underſtand,
Why I this Glaſs do carry in my hand;
And though no Looking-glaſs, yet maiſt thou ſee
By it, how ſhort thy ſinfull dayes may be.

Sinner.

Sinner.

What means thy crooked ſweeping *Sythe?* haſt thou
Taken the field of the whole world to mowe?

Time.

Yes that I have, and will not let a Spire
Of with'ring graſs live, grow one Cubit higher
Than is appointed by the God of Heav'n,
At whoſe commanding word I lay all ev'n.
My Sythe is keen, and 'tis impartiall too,
For I ne're ſtrike, untill my God ſaith, do.
Cedars and Shrubs, Rich, Poor, Good, Bad, do fall
When their Time's come. ——— 'Tis I devour all.
More precious trees ſtand longer, 'till they're ripe;
But fruitleſs Cumber-grounds I often wipe
Sooner away, at his command, who ſay's
The wicked ſhall not live out half their dayes. *Pſal.* 55. 23.
And though a long time I have pickt and choſe,
And ſtill do ſo, yet all muſt in the cloſe
Be hewed down. ——— Some ſhall tranſplanted be
Into the heav'nly *Canaan*, every tree
That here is fruitfull; ——Others that have bin
(Like the wild Olive) fruitfull only in
The works of darkneſs, ſhall be hewed down,
And into everlaſting fire thrown. *Matth.* 3. 10.

Sinner.

Once more, and I have done; fain would I know
What is the reaſon Thou do'ſt Naked go?

Time.

In ſhort, it is to put all men in mind,
The Time is coming they muſt leave behind

All

Job 1. 21. All worldly pomp, and as they naked come
Into the world, return as naked home.
Riches nor Honours, Robes nor ought they have
Shall descend after them into their grave.
But that's not all: ——My naked body shows
Mark 4.22 The Time is coming, when God shall disclose
All secrets, that lye hid, and naked lay
Rom. 2.16. The hearts of all men at the Judgment day.

Sinner.

And yet once more (old Time) wilt thou declare
To me my future daies, how short they are?
Psal. 39.4. How many are to come; how many past,
That I may know how long my life shall last?

Time.

No, I may not; God hath determin'd none
Shall know how long their lives are; nor how soon
Death may o'retake them, that they alwayes may
Be making of provision for that day.
And one would think *Uncertainty* should make
The Sinners flesh to tremble, heart to ake;
To fly mad mirth, all sin, and still be doing
Something for Heav'n, who ev'ry hour's going
To Death and Judgment, and for ought he know's
Luk. 12.20. This day may end his joys, begin his woes.
To wind up all, there is a Latin Verse
Or two, which now I only shall rehearse
('Tis to the purpose, and a serious one)
I'le leav't with you to English, and have done.

Fleres si scires unum tua tempora mensem,
Rides, cum non sit forsitan una dies?

Englished.

Englished.

If thou did'ſt know thy life ſhould laſt
One month and then expire,
Tho'uldſt paſs that month in Sorrow:
And doſt thou laugh, when this day paſt
Perhaps thou maiſt retire
Into thy grave to morrow?

God grant I then may number So
My dayes, which yet remain,
That whenſoe're *Death* calls to go,
I Glory may attain. *Amen.*

In illo die, O Jeſu,
eſto mihi Jeſus.

FINIS.

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